

DELIGHT  
AND  
JUDGMENT,  
OR THE  
Great Assize.

Represented in a  
DISCOURSE  
Concerning the  
Great Day of Judgment.

And its Power to Damp and Imbitter Sen-  
sual Delights, Sports and Recreations.

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The third Edition, Corrected and Enlarged.

L O N D O N,  
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THE RIGHT

OF THE

JUDGMENT

OF THE

COURT

OF THE

COMMONS

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

THE 14TH DAY OF

MARCH 1844

IN THE

SEVENTH YEAR OF

THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY

QUEEN VICTORIA



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## The PREFACE.

**T**Hough Practical Writers have this advantage of Controversial, that they do not make themselves so many Enemies, as the other, yet I know not, what the fate of the ensuing Discourse may be : For tho' the subject relate to Manners, and the Behaviour of Men, as Christians ; yet it is to be feared, that not a few who think themselves Religious, and notwithstanding their pretended Piety, securely bathe themselves in Delights, this Book condemns, may put no very favourable construction on such endeavours, as being levell'd against things, they are used to, and the Humour of the Age hath allowed of, and rendred unquestionable ; and such it's like will call these attempts, pragmatical, and bid us, as

Constantine did Acesius in another case, erect a Ladder to Heaven, and climb up thither by our selves. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.

But it's God's Mercy, that while Christianity is decay'd in the Glory and Brightness of its Life, the Bible is still among us, and that we are not to regulate our Religion by the sickly Fancies of half Christians, but by the standing Laws of that Jesus, whose Disciples we profess

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*profess our selves to be, and whom the Primitive Believers thought themselves obliged to follow in external, as well as internal simplicity.*

*It's true, the Church is not now under Persecution, as it was in former Days, when Men made those mighty Progresses in Self-denial, but it is to be observed, that when the Saints of the first Ages pressed those Severities, they did not lay the stress on their persecuted Condition, and the necessity of the dismal Times they lived in, but on the Laws of their great Master, which they look'd upon to be as immutable, as the God that gave them: Nor can prosperity make any alteration in those Lessons, which Christ required as Essential to his Religion; Prosperity indeed was intended to prompt us to a more cheerful discharge of our Duty, but not to a neglect of those Austerities, which are the best Ornaments of the best Religion in the World.*

*As Men have managed Prosperity, it hath been the greatest Bane of Religion, and the wisest Men have taken notice how Christianity, since it hath crept out of the Thorns and Briars of Barbarous Tyranny and Oppression, hath been unhappily decreasing in its Zeal, and Fervour; Whether it is Fable, or History that tells us, that a Voice came from Heaven, saying, This Day Poison is poured out into the Church, when Ease and Plenty, and Rivers*

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*Rivers of Gold flowed into it, I shall not now enquire ; Certain it is, that external Felicity hath smilingly undermin'd the Foundations of that admirable Doctrin, and that which was formerly built on the greatest Innocence, hath since changed its Bottom, and stands too much on shew, and formality.*

*Prosperity at this Day, to the great Sorrow of all considerate Persons, gives Law to Mens Religion, and whatever crosses Prosperity, is thought to cross Religion too. What is consistent with our ease, is allow'd of as good Divinity, and whatever runs counter to our sensual Satisfaction, appears so awkward, that we fancy it no Religion, because Flesh and Blood would not have it so ; all which must necessarily arise from Unbelief, or a wavering Faith of a Life to come ; either that future Life, the Son of God hath purchased, and promised, is not look'd upon to be so great, as it is represented in the Gospel, or it is not seriously thought of ; for if it were, the Pleasures of this Life would grow Pale, and their Beauty vanish, if compared with the glorious Delights hereafter ; and the Satisfactions of this World would soon lose their Charms, if view'd by that Light, which irradiates the Holy Cherubim : If that Life deserves not Self-denial in the Pleasures of this present, Christ and his Apostles must needs have been out in the lofty Descriptions, they have given of it, and*



## The PREFACE.

*our Faith is vain; and in vain did the Son of God take all those pains, and suffer all the Agonies he did, to purchase a thing so trivial, and inconsiderable.*

*If it were a thing of no great Moment, the but moderately Pious, would not be excluded from its Glories; but when nothing but Heroick Virtue can promise it self a share in that Felicity, it cannot be otherwise, but that the Prize doth answer the difficulties in the pursuit of its attainment. They are Great and Masculine Acts, that Christianity prompts us to; and wherein can this Heroick Vertue be expressed better than in a Noble contempt of what foolish Mortals count pleasant and tickling to their Flesh and Fancy? Such acts are Arguments of a brave and generous Mind, and signs that our understanding soar above the Moon, and rely more on what God hath promised, than on what the World for the present pays. This shews that our Souls do act like themselves, and not to be biassed by Vulgar Sentiments, in that which gives a Man Reputation with the Best of Beings.*

*Christ in pressing these Lessons, hath only made a clearer Revelation of what the Philosophers of old guessed at by the glimmering light, which Nature gave them, and what can be more for a Man's Credit, than to do that, which both Nature and Grace have judged to be most honourable and glorious.*

*There*

## The PREFACE.

There is no Question, but if that Eternal Life hereafter, were shewn in all its Glories, and Riches, and Contents to a sensual Man at the same time, that he beholds the most charming delights of the Flesh; and had he as lively a view of the one, as he hath of the other, the infinite brightness of the one would so eclipse, and darken the feebler splendour of the other, that he would not only be content to quit his inferiour delights for the enjoyment of the other, but would very much wonder at that Monster, that should refuse the greater for the lesser pleasures; so that all the difficulty is, how to make that Eternal Life so visible, that it shall move, and affect, and preponderate above all earthly satisfactions. And the way to do this, is the same with the Method, that must be taken in making the Day of Judgment visible to us, which is the attempt of the following Discourse, in which I hope I have said nothing but what is agreeable to the Doctrin of the Primitive Church. If any shall find fault with some passages in it, because they contradict the Vanity and Luxury of the Age we live in, or charge me with meddling with things, which do not belong to me to determine, all I shall reply, is this, that I have done no more, but what I have excellent Precedents for, even some of the best Divines of our Church since the Re-

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## The PREFACE.

*formation, whose Example as I am not ashamed to follow, so since they thought it their duty to discourage such Vulgar Errours, it cannot be a Crime in us to follow their Faith, knowing the end of their Conversation.*

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THE

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THE  
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1. In a



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Delight



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# DELIGHT AND JUDGMENT, OR THE *Great Assize.*

Eccles. xi. 9.

*Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy Heart cheer thee in the days of thy Youth, and walk in the ways of thy Heart, and in the sight of thine Eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into Judgment.*

**T**Here is no Man certainly better able to give us so true an Account of the Nature, Extent, Danger, Exit, and End of sensual Pleasure, as *Solomon*, the Son of *David*; a wise Son of a wise Father, a Man wise to a Prodigy, wiser than all the Children of the East, to whose comprehensive Brain nothing came amiss; whose penetrating Mind contained the whole circle of Arts and Sciences, and whose insatiable desire after Knowledge, made him enquire

enquire into the Nature of Sin ; and not content with the speculation of the Delights it caused in corrupted Souls, ventured even upon the practice of them ; he walked through the whole Garden, tasted of all the Fruits, smelt to every Flower, and I believe many times sinned, not so much out of fondness to the Sin, as for Tryals sake, to acquaint himself with the Nature of the Folly, and to see, whether there was really that satisfaction in it which the brutish part of the World said there was : But while he tried Experiments upon the Viper, the Beast flew into his Face, and poyson'd the *Empirick*. He went on in these slippery ways, and walk'd on this Sea of Glass a considerable time, spread the Sails of his sensual Desires, and bid his carnal Mind ask and crave whatever it could fancy, and if either Love, or Money, or Force could procure it, it should have it. He hugg'd all the little shooting flames he met with, and kissed every thing that had the Name and Reputation of Mirth and Jollity.

But see the sad *Catastrophe*, and woful turn of that pleasant Wheel ; when he thought himself in *Paradise*, he found himself in *Hell*, and that which tickled his Senses at the first, proved after some time his greatest Torment and Vexation. Pro-  
vidence

vidence can be silent for a time ; but at last the sleeping Lion wakes, and roars so, that all the Beasts of the Field do Tremble ; and Solomon, on whose Head the Candle of the Lord had shined so long, found that Light at last go out in a Snuff, and himself the Object of Gods Wrath and Indignation ; he found by sad experience, what it was to abuse the Wisdom God had bestowed upon him, how dangerous the Paths were he had walked in, what it was to pervert the End and Design of the Gifts of God ; and what darkness and confusion it brought upon Men, and that makes him impart this sad *Memento* to the Man who hath Blood, and Youth, and Strength enough to be vain and foolish ; *Rejoyce, O Young Man, in thy Youth, and let thy Heart chear thee in the days of thy Youth, &c.*

By way of Explication, I must take notice of these few things:

1. That the words *young Man*, and *Youth* in Scripture, especially in this Book, are not only meant of that time we commonly allow to Youth, which is from Ten or Fourteen to Twenty or Five and Twenty, but include all that Age which is fit for Action, and the Hebrew words import so much, being derived from a Root, implying Choice and Election ; so that

בחור  
בחירות



that the time here aimed at, is the most vigorous time of our Life, or that time which any Man of Sense would chuse for Action.

2. That those Sentences which sound like Exhortations, are perfectly Ironical, or spoke by way of *derision*, as if we should say to a Man, *Go play the Fool, burn thy Finger in the Candle, and see what thou wilt get by it*; whereby, we do not mean that he should do so, but do rather express the filliness and simplicity of the thing, to make him avoid it: And such Ironical Expressions, or mocking Exhortations are very frequent in Scripture; as, *1 Kings 18. 27. Cry aloud, for he is asleep*; which is a kind of mocking the stupid Priests of Baal, that called on a Stock or Stone; so, *Jer. 49. 11. Leave thy Fatherless Children, and let thy Widows trust in me, i. e. Ay, go, comfort thy self with this, that I will take care of thy Fatherless Children, and provide for thy Widows, but thou shalt find thy self egregiously mistaken*; So *2 Cor. 12. 13. For what is it wherein you were inferior to other Churches, except it be, that I my self was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong; i. e. If I did wrong you in doing so, it was a very pleasant Wrong or Injustice, for which you have more reason to thank me, than to be Angry with me. So here; Re-*  
*joyce*

joyce O young Man, &c. i. e. go play the Mad-man, let thy sensual Appetite rove, gratifie thy Flesh, please thy besotted Heart, fix thine Eyes on what Beauty thou thinkest fit; sing Care, and Reason, and thy Wits away, and see what the issue of all will be; and so much is evident from the following words, which are a Bridle to all these Extravagancies, and the Gall that embitters all these Sweets; and therefore the Chaldee Paraphrase justly turns these Mock-exhortations into a serious Admonition; *Walk in humility, let not thine Eyes gaze upon that which is evil, but be exceeding cautious; and so the Septuagint; Walk spotless in the ways of thy Heart, and not in the Lust of thine Eyes.*

3. God brings a Man into Judgment two ways, either by causing his Conscience to awake with horror in this life, and laying some other heavy Affliction upon him, and there is Mercy in this Process; for this may yet lead the forlorn Soul to serious thoughts of Repentance, bring the Pangs and Throws of the New-Birth upon her, and deliver her into a New-Creature: Or, where God intends a higher degree of Wrath, and Indignation, he lets the jovial Sinner alone on this side Hell, and the burthen shall not fall on him, till he comes to look the Angry Judge in the Face, at which time, as the Surprize will be greater, so the

the horror and anguish of Mind, which will seize on the Sinner, will, like *Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace*, prove Seven times hotter than ordinary; upon which follows eternal Despair, and endless Howling and gnashing of Teeth.

The Result of all, is this Proposition:

*That the Prospect of a future Judgment is enough to embitter all the sensual and carnal Delights of Men, particularly of Young Men, and to bring a Damp upon the most youthful and most jovial temper imaginable.* Not only the Sense of the Text, I have already laid down, imports so much, but there is this farther in it, that the Wise-man seems to couch his Argument plainly thus; Do but take a view of that dreadful Judgment God is resolved to bring thy guilty Soul to, and thou wilt not dare to indulge thy self in the mad rejoycings of thy Youth, nor walk in the ways, and after the Fancies of thy corrupted heart, nor suffer thy wanton Eyes to fix on those Objects, from which God hath bid thee turn thy Face away.

You know the Story of the young Gallant, who riding by a lonely *Hermit's Cell*, and finding the solitary Man very devout and fervent in Prayer, and looking with a severe and mortified countenance, called to him, *Father, Father*, what a Fool are you to debar yourself of the charming

Refresh-



Refreshments and Pleasures of this Life, and live here immured within Walls of Mud, and Clay? What if there should be no other World, to what purpose is all this Rigor and Mortification? The *Hermit* heard him, smiled, and replied, Ay, but Friend, What if there should be one, where are you then? What a Fool will you be then? How will you wish, that you had been in my Condition? The Youngster startled at these Words, went Home, left his Women, and his Swine, his Lusts, and dry Husks of brutish Delights, and like the Prodigal, became another Man.

The Truth is, we have seen this prospect of a future Judgment, have very strange Effects upon a Man, who was not apt to be frightened with sad *Prognostications*, and that was *Felix*, a Person, who had drunk as deep of the stolen Waters of Sensuality, as any Man then living; for he lay in the embraces of *Drusilla*, who was another Mans Wife, and enjoy'd that Beauty which his lustful Appetite desired, without Lett or Control: His Greatness bore him out in the Commission of the Crime; and whatever Censures the soberer part of Men might pass upon him, his Grandeur over-aw'd them, that they durst not speak aloud of his Impiety, and all Men flatter'd him, and himself drowned  
all



all the internal Twitches and Stings of Conscience with Noise, and Pomp, and Multitude of busineses; yet, behold when *St. Paul reasoned of Temperance, Righteousness, and Judgment to come*, the Text saith, *Felix trembled.* The Acts 24. 25. Sermon awaken'd the notions of Divine Justice, that were Engraven on the Tables of his Heart, made him uneasie, put him into consternation, and for the present forced him to loath the Bed where his abomination was wrought.

We are told of a Custom in some Kingdom that the Night before a condemned Malefactor is to die, a very shrill Trumpet sound before the Prison door, which is a certain sign that he is to die next Day; and before whose Door soever the fatal Trumpet sound over Night, no Prayers, no Tears whatever Condition he is of, or whatever Figure he makes in the World, can save him from being executed.

It happen'd in process of time, that the King who had made this Law, after he had stream'd out a considerable part of his Life in extravagant Actions, on a sudden became serious, was often seen to retire into his Closet, gave strict Order for extermination of all Vices; and though before he had doated on Mirth, and Jest and sensual Satisfactions, yet these were now all abandon'd, and turn'd into a Scene

of Gravity and Sobriety ; Such an Alteration, we must think must be a very strange surprize to Courtiers ; who, impatient of this change, and supposing it to be a Fit of Melancholy, took the freedom to ask him, what the reason of this Reformation was ? The Kings Brother especially, none of the most Religious, sought often to divert him, tempting him to see Shows, and Plays, and Women, and such Baits as served either to Plant or Cherish Vanity in his Mind and Affections, but all in Vain.

One Night, the King desirous to bring his Brother to a better Sense of spiritual things, bids the fatal Trumpet to be sounded before the jolly Princes House, who, sensible of the meaning of that Noise, that he was to die next morning, starts out of his Bed, throws by his stately Robes, puts on a ragged Garment, Weeps Rivers of Tears, and a Mighty horror seizes his Mind, and as soon as it was Day, comes to the King in this posture, and intercedes for his Life : To whom the King said, O Brother, are you frightened with the Sound of this Trumpet, which foretels my Subjects approaching and inevitable Death, and doth this Noise force you into Tears, and Sack-cloth, and humble Supplications, and can you blame me for being serious,

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who

who know not how soon the Archangels Trumpet, of far greater consequence and importance than this, will Sound in mine Ears, and Summon me and you, and all my Subjects to the Judgment-seat of God, and perhaps to eternal Despair and Agonies? Go Home, said he, and by my example learn to despise the World, and prepare for that Day.

But this Subject will invite us to a larger Discourse, and therefore it will be necessary to enquire,

1. What Reason we have to believe, that there is a Day of Judgment.

2. What there is in that future Judgment that's able to cast a damp on the Mirth and Jollities of Men, especially the younger sort.

3. How the Prospect of that Judgment must be managed, that it may actually damp and put a stop to these carnal Delights.

4. Whether every Man is Bound to embitter his carnal Delights with this Prospect.

5. Whether upon this account a Man be obliged to Mind nothing that favours of worldly Delight and sensual Satisfaction.

1. What reason have we to believe that there is a Day of Judgment?

Having



Having to deal with Christians, at least with Men that profess themselves such, this Query seems needless ; for the Scripture, which the Christian World pretends to believe to be derived from God, is full of Passages of this Nature, and assures us, that this Belief of a future Judgment, is as Ancient as the Creation of the World ; for *Enoch* the Seventh from *Adam*, who in all probability had it from his Ancestors, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with Ten Thousand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of their hard Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have Spoken against him, *Jude* v. 14, 15. And this Faith hath been followed by all the succeeding Saints, Patriarchs, Prophets, and judicious Men, was confirmed by the great *Messiah*, the Lord *Jesus*, and his Apostles, who gave us a more lively description of it, and hath since been entertained by all the Christian World, at least in profession, though there are but few that act and live like Persons influenced or over-aw'd by that Belief ; so that if Christians keep close to their Principles, it can be no difficult thing to perswade them to believe that which they imbibe with their Mothers Milk, and



Education advances into an open Profession and daily Declaration.

But we have seen, and do see a strange degenerateness in most Christians, and not a few that go under that Name, though they do not openly question this Truth, yet they either live as if they did, or Infidelity reigns secretly in their Hearts; and it is to be feared, that whatever their Tongues may speak, in their Minds they are not fully perswaded of it.

And were such Men willing to be perswaded, it should be no contemptible Argument to convince them, one would think, that the greatest part of the World is of that Belief, not only *Christians*, but *Jews*, *Mahometans*, and the *Heathens* themselves; that it is a grand Article of the Jewish Faith, none can deny that ever convers'd with them; that the *Mahometans* are stedfast and sincere in their Assertion, and clear in this Point, any one may see that hath read their *Alcoran*; and that the Heathen World is no stranger to it, appears from what their *Sybilline Oracles*, their *Philosophers* and *Poets* have professed.

The *Sybilline Oracles* indeed are suspected by learned Men, and looked upon as Pious Frauds, used by the Fathers, thereby to convince the Heathens the better

better of the Myſteries of Chriſtianity; though it will not enter into my Head; how the Fathers could have confirmed any of their Doctrines from theſe Oracles, if the Heathens they had to deal withal, either were not ſatisfied that thoſe things had been ſpoken by their *Prophetesses*, or had believed that the Fathers had ſoiſted thoſe Oracles into the *Sybil's* Writings, which either were not, or had never been there; for this would have been ſo far from being an Argument againſt the Pagans, that the Chriſtians would have laid themſelves open in nothing ſo much, as in theſe Quotations, had they been falſe or ſuppoſitious.

However, *Plato's* Writings have been conveyed to us *Plat. in Phad.* without any ſignal corruption, and he gives us a very accurate Account of this great Day, as *Hydaſpes*, an ancient King of the *Medes*, had done before him, and the Heathen Poets, though indulging their Fancies in ſome things; yet have delivered many excellent Truths to us, whereof this future Judgment is not the leaſt; we need go no farther than the Sixth Book of *Virgil's Aeneids*, where the Opinions of the Ancient Heathen Sages are collected and expreſſed in Verſe; and it is worth obſerving, that he makes his

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Judge

Judge *Rhadamantus* inflict particular Punishments on those Souls that have deferred their Repentance to their Death-beds.

And how can we imagine, that the whole World, at least the wiser part of it, should so unanimously believe a future judgment after this Life, if either there had not been a great propensity in their Nature, to believe the Notion, or Reason had not convinced them of the Certainty and Reality of the Thing : If we grant, that God hath given a Law to Man, we must necessarily grant, that there must be a Judge to call those to an Account, who have violated and broke those Laws. Man we see is capable of being governed by a Law, and without a Law to govern him, would run Wild, and become a meer Brute, we must therefore necessarily believe that God hath given us a Law ; and what Law more suitable to his Nature, or the Principle of Reason, than what we have in the Bible, which is indeed the Law of Nature, expressed in livelier and more legible Characters ? It is fit therefore, there should a time come, when the Obedience and Disobedience of Men may be taken notice of, and the Obedient rewarded, and the Disobedient punished. God hath made Man his *Viceroy* here on Earth ;  
to

to which purpose David said, *Psal. 8. 6.*  
*Thou hast set him over the Works*  
*of thy Hands, and hast put all things under*  
*his Feet*; and Experience shews, that Man  
hath a Dominion over all irrational Crea-  
tures; and is it not Convenient, that at  
the end of the World, when all Men  
have acted their part on this Stage, this  
*Viceroy* should be examined, and asked,  
how true he hath been to his Sovereign  
King? What he hath done with the  
Creatures which have been given him for  
his use; and whether he hath not minded  
his own business more than his Masters?

If there is no Judgment to come, there  
can be no God; for without a future re-  
tribution this God cannot be just, and a  
God that is not just, is imperfect, and if  
imperfect, he cannot be God; so true is  
that saying of *Averroes*, that whatever is  
most Noble, and most Praise-worthy in  
Man, must be attributed to the best and  
greatest being, God blessed for evermore;  
Justice we see, is that, which makes a  
Prince on Earth great, and is one of the  
highest Perfections he is capable of, which  
was the Reason that when *Ptolomy* asked  
the Seventy *Interpreters* of the Jewish Law,  
what King lived freest from Fear and Vi-  
olence? He was answered, *He that exer-*  
*cises Justice, Punishes the Bad, and rewards*



*the Good* ; and consequently this Justice must be ascribed to God, as the most perfect Being : It would be the most unreasonable thing imaginable, that those who Love and Fear him most, should be most oppressed, and go without reward ; and those that abuse and dishonour him, slight and undervalue him, should live prosperously, and never feel his Displeasure or Indignation. If God be Wise and Just, this cannot be ; and since this Reward of the Innocent, and severity on the wicked, is not administered and dispensed in this World, it must needs follow, that it must be in another, and the Day of this future Recompence, we call the Day of Judgment.

And though the Apprehensions of that vast multitude of Men, which believe or profess it, about the Manner and Method of this Day, be very different, yet it is enough, that all agree in the thing, even those who have not the revealed Scriptures of the Old and New Testament ; from whence we may justly fetch the truest and exactest description of it, those Revelations and Writings the Christians have, and what is said in them concerning the Righteousness of God, being most agreeable to the Nature of God, and the Actions of Men, and the Rules, the Supream Architect hath Engraven on our Reason.

That

That there are some Men, who deny a future Judgment, we need wonder no more than we do, that the Fool should say in his Heart, *There is no God*. That which makes a Man deny the one, tempts him to be bold in disbelieving the other. It is the true Interest of a sinful Life, there should be no Retribution; and how can a Man act against God with any chearfulness or alacrity, except he puts him out of his thoughts, and to compleat the Folly, Fancies that he will never call him to a reckoning. Its Mens Vices that are the cause of their Atheism; and were it not, that they are enamoured with their Lusts, their Reason would soon joyn issue with these Verities: It is not for want of Arguments that Men are Unbelievers in this knowing Age, but for want of Sobriety and Consideration; and while they suffer themselves to be drawn away by their sensual Appetite, no marvel, if in time, their Flesh incroaches upon their Understanding, and their brutish Desires corrupt their very Reason, and they begin to think, that God is altogether such a one as they themselves. Love to Vice darkens the Understanding, which is never clearer than when Virtue Governs the Man; Its Notions then are clear, and the Reasonableness of the things unseen ap-

pears without shadows and uncomfortable obscurities. Vice by degrees clouds the Mind, and Love to that makes the Man first regardless of those Truths ; soon after he questions those Verities, and he begins to doubt whether he hath not been imposed upon all this while, and at last he sinks into a downright denial. The Devil we may suppose is not idle in these cases ; and having first debauched the lower Faculties, he soon corrupts the higher ; and the Sinner once in the Net, comes to be involv'd in greater dangers, not to mention that a just God withdraws his Light, and Spirit, whereby the Soul falls into greater Darkness. But let's see,

2. What there is in the prospect of this future Judgment, that is able to damp the greatest Mirth and Jollity.

1. In the prospect of this Judgment, there appears a very serious Judge, even the mighty *Jesus*, the Son of God, who was seen to weep often, but to laugh never ; even he that came into the World to Teach Men Self-denial in sensual Pleasures, not only unlawful, such as Wantonness, Effeminacy, Fornication, Adultery, Uncleaness, Drunkenness, Feeding our Eyes with Lustful Objects, and which produce ill Desires in us, deriding and jeering our Neighbors for their Infirmities,

mities, luxury in cloathing, eating and drinking, Mimick Gestures, Filthy Jest-ing, Love-tricks, talking loosely, &c. But in some Measure in Lawful also, especially where a greater good is to be promoted, and hath bid us use these outward Comforts as if we used them not, and rejoyce in them as if we rejoyced not, with fear and cautiousness, that they draw not our Hearts away, and with a generous indifferency, as Persons who have laid up their Treasure in another World, and look for the Blessed Hope, and the Glorious appearing of the great God.

Such a Judge appears in this prospect ; one who descended into this vally of Tears upon the most serious Errand imaginable, even to call Sinners to Repentance, to make them sensible of what God expects at their Hands, to convince them, that they have Souls to be saved, to assure them, that though God is Patient, yet he will not be everlastingly affronted by bold and daring Men, and judges otherwise of things than besotted Mortals, and is in good earnest when he bids them set their affections upon the things which are above ; one who will not be put off with fooling, nor spare a Malefactor for a jest ; one who gave Mankind a Being and Habitation here, not to play, but to work, not



to mind Trifles and Rattles, but the Concerns of a tremendous Eternity ; a Judge, whose Eyes are like Flames of Fire, and his Feet like Brass glowing in a Furnace, who was indeed a Lamb when he had his Conversation here on Earth, and like one was led to the slaughter, not opening his Mouth, and is still so to all those that take his Yoke upon them, and learn of him to be Humble and Meek, but will at last appear in all the Robes of Majesty which the Clouds of Heaven, and a Guard of Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand Angels, and all the Light of the Throne of God can furnish him with.

This Judge knows all the Secrets of our Hearts, and before him all things are naked and open, and no Creature can hide himself ; he is one who cannot be imposed upon by Sophistry, nor wheedled into a wrong Judgment of things by equivocation ; whose presence will shake the World, and put the greatest Captains and stoutest Souldiers into Fits of trembling, and make them Cry to Rocks and Mountains, *Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb.*

This Judge is not to be corrupted, nor to be bribed ; cannot be carried away with outward respects, which make Judges  
*here*

here on Earth pervert Judgment; these judge too often according to Affection, and call white black, and black white, good evil, and evil good, defend vice under the notion of virtue, rashness under the name of fortitude, laziness under the colour of Moderation, and timorousness under the title of cautiousness; these do too often become Advocates for the Prodigal, and call them liberal and generous; the Covetous with them pass for Frugal; the Lascivious for Courtiers; the Talkative for Affable; the Obstinate for Men of Resolution, and the Dull and Idle for Persons who act with great Deliberation: Love to their Kindred and Blood, makes them extenuate Faults in their Relations, and that which appears an inexpressible crime in Strangers, seems but a peccadillo or infirmity in a Child or Brother: *Herod* hurried away with his Amours to *Herodias*, beheads the Innocent *Baptist*; *Flaminius* out of Love to his Harlot, violates the Publick Faith; *Julius Cæsar*, out of fondness to *Cleopatra*, gives Sentence against her Brothers; *David's* inordinate Affection to a Rebel-Son, tempts him to give the Army charge to take care of the Young Man *Absalom*.

But the Judge we speak of, is of another Temper; it was his Character here on

on Earth, that he was *no respecter of Persons*; nor could the Sons of *Zebedee* prevail with him to place them, one at his right Hand, the other at his left; and it was not Kindred he would advance to that Dignity, but such for whom it was prepared by his Father: Hence it was, that his Mother and Brethren found no farther acceptance with him, than they were obedient to his Word; and he deliver'd it as his Eternal Rule, *They that do the will of my Father, they are my Mother, and Brethren, and Sisters*; and with this Motto he gave a Reprimand to the Woman that cried, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps which thou hast sucked*; yea, *blessed are they*, said he, *who bear the Word of God, and do it*: And he that here on Earth could not be wrought upon by Kindred, or Consanguinity, nor blinded by Affection, sure will not be misled by these false Fires in the great Day of Judgment.

Judges here on Earth, if Passion, or hatred to a Man, Reigns in their Minds, are too often tempted to pass Wrong Sentences: What the Effects of *Progne's* hatred to her Husband *Tereus* were, and how the Innocent Son suffered by it; how dire the hatred of *Medea* to *Jason* was, and drew the Death of their Children after it; how *Joseph's Brethren* condemned that guiltless Soul,



Soul, meerly because they hated and envied him ; and how the *Jews* dealt with our great Master the Lord *Jesus* upon this Principle, both Civil and Sacred Histories do sufficiently manifest. But this impotent Passion cannot light upon him, who is to be the Judge in the last Day. He hates nothing that he hath made, and is so great a lover of all Mankind, that he would have *all Men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth*, and would give them all Eternal Life, if they would but take the way he prescribes them. The Devils themselves, could they be Penitent, would be received into Favour ; and let a Man be Born of a *Jew* or *Turk*, if he do but bring forth fruits meet for Repentance, neither his odious Name, nor loathsome Kindred shall exclude him from his Bosom.

He hath no secret Spleen or Pique against any Person living ; and though God under the Law seems to vent a particular displeasure against the Seven Nations, and especially against the *Amalekites*, yet it was for their monstrous and unnatural Sins, that his just Displeasure rose against them, not any private Grudge, or Envy he bore to them as Men, above other of his Creatures.

Such



Such Imperfections are not incident to our Judge, who detests and abhors no Person, but what makes himself deformed and odious to his purer Eyes; and *in every Nation whosoever serves him, and works Righteousness, is accepted of him.*

Fear very often prevails upon Governors and Men in Office here upon Earth, that they dare not speak their Mind in passing Sentence, for fear of offending a Favorite, or losing their Places, or being accounted pragmatistical, or missing such a Preferment, distorts their Judgments, and makes them take wrong Measures of things. This makes Laws Cobwebs for great Men, and Traps to catch lesser Animals; this tempted *Pilate* to crucifie the holy *Jesus*, and though he was sensible of his Innocence, yet the Word, *If thou let this Man go thou art not Cæsar's Friend*, turns the Scales, and makes him comply with the Fury of the People: But such Fears cannot fall on this Judge of the whole Earth: Whom should he fear? Of whom should he be afraid? He is Omnipotent: Will a Painter be afraid of his Picture, or a Man of his Shadow? Man is but God's Picture, and his Shadow, and shall the Almighty be afraid of his own Creature, whom he can crush into Atoms, into nothing with a Frown? Who can make this Judge happier

pier than he is already ? What place can  
 any Creature promise him, who doth  
 what he pleases in all the Armies of Heaven,  
 and among all the Inhabitants of the  
 Earth ? There is no careſſing him with  
 Gold ; for all Men and Women will ap-  
 pear before him Poor and Miſerable, de-  
 ſtitute of that Pomp, and Grandeur, and  
 Finery, on which here they doated ; and  
 ſuppoſe they could carry their Wealth  
 with them to the great Tribunal, what  
 can they give him, who commands all the  
 Treasures, of the World, whoſe is the  
 Earth and the fulneſs thereof, and who is  
 himſelf the giver of thoſe things which  
 Mankind prepoſterouſly place their happi-  
 neſs in ? Here the greateſt Emperors and  
 Princes muſt appear without their Guards,  
 without their Armies, without their Swords  
 and Spears ; Here Popes muſt leave their  
 Triple Crowns behind them, Kings their  
 Diadems, Biſhops their Miters, Noble-  
 men their Lacqueys, and all ſtand naked  
 and unarmed before the Throne ; and  
 ſuppoſe that Men were permitted to come  
 with their former Retinue and Attendance  
 into the preſence of the Almighty, yet  
 this would cauſe no fear in our Judge,  
 who will come attended with an innume-  
 rable Company of Angels, one of which  
 did once ſlay one hundred Fourſcore and  
 Five

Five Thousand Men in the *Assyrian* Camp.

Such a serious, such a magnificent Judge appears in the prospect of that future Judgment, even *Jesus*, the Son of the living God. He who was once despised and rejected of Men, will at this time sit on the Throne of Glory, and all Eyes shall see him; and though God himself is sometimes said to be the Judge, sometimes *Christ* as Man, sometimes the *Apostles*, sometimes the *Saints* in general, sometimes even wicked Men; yet this implies no Contradiction. In God no doubt, lies the Sovereign Power, and no Creature can either absolve, or condemn without his Will and Order; and this his Power of judging in the last Day, he hath committed to the Son of Man, or to *Christ* as Man, whom he hath not only made Heir of all things, but for a reward of his Sufferings, given a Name above every Name, and delegated him to be Judge of the Quick and the Dead; and this glorious Commissioner calls in the *Apostles* in the first place, and all other Saints after them, to sit with him on the Bench, and by their Suffrage to applaud the Sentence he shall pass on the stubborn and obstinate; wicked Men shall be Judges only comparatively, as the Means of  
Grace

Grace they had, were less powerful than those of their Neighbors, and yet went beyond them in Goodness and Holiness, at least were not so bad as they; and consequently shall be Witnesses against them, and in a manner judge and doom them to unspeakable Anguish, because they trampled on the Grace which was offered to their Souls, in which sense the Men of *Nineveh*, and the Queen of *Sheba* shall rise in Judgment with that Generation, who saw the Miracles of Christ, and repented not, and Condemn them, because a greater than *Jonas*, a greater than *Solomon* was here.

2. In the prospect of this Judgment, there appears a very strict examination of what we have done in the Flesh, not only of visible Actions, but of Words spoken in Secret, and Thoughts, Desires, Intentions and Resolutions of our Hearts; an Examination, which will be a very great surprise to the Sinner, who hath made light of things of this nature; for *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be brought to light*, saith he that understood this Day better than any Man living, *Luke 12. 2.*

Not only the bigger Crimes, such as Murder, Adultery, Fornication, Blasphemy, unnatural Lust, Stealing, Perjury, Atheism,



Atheism, Idolatry, Apostasie, Cursing, Swearing, Drunkenness, Extortion, Covetousness, Contempt of God, and of his Word, &c. will here be manifested and censured, aggravated and searched into, but the secret Lustings of the Soul, the hidden things of Dishonesty, the cunning Craftiness of Men, whereby they lay in wait to deceive; the Mines and Pits Men have privily digg'd for their Neighbors, their underhand Dealings, their Chamber-Practices, their sinful Contrivances in the Dark, or in their Closets, their sailing to the Port of Vain-Glory by a side-wind, their speaking Truth for ill ends, their Misinterpretations of their Brethrens Words and Actions, their reporting things to anothers prejudice; all these will be laid open before the whole World.

Sinner, thy unchast Embraces, thy impure Wishes, thy wanton Glances, thy lascivious Looks, thy Delight in amorous Songs, thy acting thy Lust over in thy Mind again, thy ruminating upon thy last Nights Revelling, thy tempting thy self to Sin, and being thine own Devil, and thy committing impurity with thy self, will all be set in order before thee, and the Judge will demand, how it was possible for thee, who didst profess thy self a follower of the Chaste and Holy *Jesus*,  
to

to dishonour him and his Religion with  
such extravagant Actions, and irreligious  
Proceedings? Thy Slovenliness in Devo-  
tion, thy Hypocrisie, and seeming to be  
better than really thou wert, thy inatten-  
tive Prayers, the wilful Wandrings of thy  
Thought when thou wast speaking to God,  
thy not redeeming the Time, thy negle-  
cting to observe the greater and weightier  
Matters of the Law, thy mispending thy  
precious Hours, thy Idleness and Laziness  
in God's Vineyard, thy not giving to the  
Poor according to thy ability, thy Pride,  
and secret Envy, and desire of Applause,  
and sinister Ends and Designs in preaching,  
praying, administering and receiving of  
the holy Sacrament, and in other good  
Works, thy flattering, and dissembling,  
and unwillingness to do good when thou  
hadst a fair opportunity; these will all  
be laid open to thy Sorrow and Confusion.  
Thy not being led by good Examples, thy  
slighting wholesom Admonitions, thy  
laughing at excellent Counsel, thy scorn-  
ing Reproof, and hating him that gave  
it, thy resolvedness to do that again for  
which thou wast reprov'd, the delay of  
thy seriousness, thy suffering the convic-  
tions thou hadst to be choaked with the  
Cares and Riches of the World; thy being  
at an Ale-house when thou shouldst have  
bee

been in thy Closet, thy being at a Play when thy Hand and Heart should have been lifted up in holy Supplications, thy being in Bed when thou shouldst have been upon thy Knees, and neglecting a greater Duty for a Trifle or Impertinence, the Supper of the Lamb for Farms and Oxen, and thy preferring the silliest and most ridiculous Discourses before a Conference about the momentous concerns of Eternity; these will all be rehearsed at large: *For I say unto you, that every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment,* saith Christ, *Matth. 12. 36.* Not having repented of things of this Nature, either through unbelief or carelesness, when these points shall come to be examined, and thy Soul interrogated upon these Particulars, and so many too, it stands to reason, that it must necessarily cause very great astonishment; for these things were most certainly forbid in that Gospel thou didst profess, and that notwithstanding, as if such things had never been spoken of, thou shouldst slight them and undervalue them, and not think them worth thy care to shun them; what sad Reflexions will this Examination cause?

In vain dost thou hope that Eagles catch no Flies, and that God will never Mind

such



such small, trivial and inconsiderable Errors. He that minded these smaller Faults, as they seem to carnal Men, and took notice of them in this Life, may justly be supposed resolved to call Men to an Account for them in that solemn Day of reckoning ; for indeed God's Proceedings here are an Emblem of his process in Judgment hereafter.

Eating of the forbidden Fruit in Paradise, seem'd but an inconsiderable oversight ; yet did God Curse the very Earth for that Fact, made it bring forth Briars and Thorns for the future, condemned *Adam* to the eating of Bread in the Sweat of his Brows, and threatned the Woman, his Partner in the Error, to multiply her pain and sorrows. It doth not appear from *Moses*, that the Children of God, or Professors of the true Religion did any more than Marry with the Daughters of the prophaner Crew, a small fault, a brutish Man would think ; yet was the Insolence lash'd, and the inordinate Fire quencht with a Deluge of Waters ; *Lot's* Wife looks Back to *Sodom*, out of curiosity perhaps, a venial folly, natural to Women, it seems to be, and no more ; yet for doing so, she is turn'd into a Pillar of Salt : *Achan*, as a Souldier, (and that sort of Men, we know, Live much upon Prey)



Prey) takes in a time of War a Golden Wedge, and *Babylonian* Mantle (no great matter one would think) yet God orders him to be stoned; *Uzzah*, out of his over-care that the Ark might not fall, lays hold on't, to support it; yet for so doing, is struck with Death immediately; the Prophet who came from *Judah* to Prophecy against the Altar of *Bethel*, in suffering himself to be persuaded to Eat Bread, by another Prophet, who pretended Visions too, to ones thinking, committed no great Crime, yet God revenged his Disobedience with a violent Death; for a Lion, sent by God, slew him. *Moses* grows impatient at the Waters of *Meribah*; Who would not have done so that had to deal with so stubborn a People? Yet that Act of Mistrust and Impatience cost him the loss of the Land of *Canaan*, he had so long desired to behold; the People of *Israel* murmured in the Wilderness, a thing that People might easily do who were kept so long in a barren Desert, without seeing an end of their Travel, yet of that vast number of Six hundred Thousand Men, not one enters into the Promised Land, save *Caleb* and *Joshua*; *Ananias* and *Sapphira* seemed to be guilty of no great Misdemeanor; for they were content to give half of their Estate to the Poor, but kept

Kept the other to themselves; yet is God so Angry, that he punishes their violating of their Vow to give all, with sudden Death. Go now, Sinner, and fancy, that God will not call thee to an account for Faults the World makes nothing of; because he doth not do it here, he will certainly do it hereafter, and the Examples of the Bible are *Items* that he will do so.

It's no matter, whether the thing, in which the Offence is committed, seem inconsiderable or no, the disobedience is all in all; if God commands thee to avoid a thing that's trivial, its the easier Task to do according to his Will; and because it was so easie to obey, and thou wouldst not, its that which makes thy disobedience grievous and heinous, tho' the matter of the Offence seems mean and contemptible. *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft, and Stubbornness is as Iniquity, and Idolatry*, said Samuel, in a case

1 Sam. 15. 23.

much like this, where the thing done by Saul, was so far from seeming ill, that it appeared like a Work of Mercy, and an Act of Gratitude; for he spared the best of the Sheep, and brought home Agag the King alive in Triumph; yet this excused not the Fact, but rather aggravated it; for *hath the Lord as great delight in Burnt-*

C

Offerings,

*Offerings, and Sacrifices, as in the obeying the Voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams, as the Prophet tells him, v. 22.*

This confirms the Method of Christ's proceeding in the last Day ; and indeed how could that Judgment be perfect, if the lesser, as well as the greater Errours were not to be accounted for, and mens disobedience against the lesser, as well as the greater Commands of the Gospel, was not to be manifested and proclaimed before the World ? And though this is chiefly to be understood of Men who die without sincere Repentance, yet it is more than probable, that even the Sins of those who were justified and sanctified, will be brought to Light, and discovered before the vast Assembly that shall appear before the Throne of God in that Day ; not that they need fear any hurt or disadvantage that will arise from that examination and publication, but by these means both the Glory of God, and the Glory of these true Converts will appear more illustrious ; the Glory of God, who hath snatch'd such Persons like Brands out of the Fire, pull'd them out of the miery Clay, in which they were ready to Perish, and taken them out of the Devils Clutches, than which, there cannot be a greater sign of  
the

the Power and goodness of God ; and who sees not how much it will be for the Credit and Honour of the Saints themselves ?

For to let the World see first the Bands and Ropes that once held them, and how, like *Samson*, they broke them all, and carried away the Gates of *Gaza*, and escaped out of Hell in despite of all the Devils, that raged and stormed, and domineer'd there ; What can be said more for their renown and glory ? What hurt doth the Penitent *Mary Magdalen* receive by the *Evangelists* recording, or our speaking of her former Whoredoms ? No more will the revealing of holy Mens faults and errors in the last Day, eclipse, but rather advance their goodness, because they extricated themselves from the Snare of the Fowler, and generously roused themselves from their fatal Slumber, and in despite of Temptations, would press towards the Mark of endless glory. Their Errors being published, with their true Repentance, and Change of Life, justifies God in accepting of them, while he refuses others, and proclaims their Wisdom in chusing the better part, and Condemns the Impenitent, and discovers how justly they are left to Gods Vengeance, who would in despite of al



the Offers of Gods favour, prefer their Dirt and Trash before an invisible, lasting and solid Felicity ; and though its true, that holy Mens Sins are said in Scripture to be covered, and God is brought in, promising to remember their Sins no more, but to drown them all in the depth of the Sea, yet can the meaning of such Passages be no other than this, that God will not remember them, so as to make use of their Errors against them to their Ruine and Condemnation ; notwithstanding this, he may justly Publish them, that their Wisdom being compared with their Folly, that may appear to go beyond this, and themselves from the thoughts of their former Sins, may reap the greater Comfort ; as *Agathocles*, being advanced from the Trade of a Potter to a Throne, at his Meals would still make use of Earthen Pots, not only to Remember his Original, but from the contemplation of his former poor and miserable Condition, to increase his present Satisfaction ; for as in our fall from a high degree of Prosperity, to the greatest Poverty and Misery, nothing Torments the Mind more than the Remembrance that once it was otherwise with us ; so, where Providence is so kind, as to bring us out of a horrible Pit, and sets our Feet upon a Rock, the remembrance

brance of our former Misery signally increases our Joy and Comfort in the present Mercy.

So then, in this great Day all Mens Sins will be examined and published, though with different effects; the Penitents, to their Absolution and Glory; the Impenitents, to their Terror and Condemnation; for to be presented their with a List of innumerable Offences and Affronts of the Divine Majesty, which there own Consciences know and must acknowledg, which yet they either never seriously thought of, or never seriously attempted to forsake; or if they repented, discovered only a Mock-repentance; what effects can this be supposed to cause, but monstrous confusion and horror of Mind? Enough to put Men into the greatest rage and distraction, to think, that they should neglect purchasing the Pearl of Price, when it was offered to their choice by God and Man.

Here particular enquiry will be made, how we have discharged the Duties of our several Relations; it's not the Purple of Princes, nor the Rods and Axes of Magistrates that will make the Almighty afraid of demanding of them, whether they have ruled their Subjects in the Fear

of God, shewn them a good Example, and punished the obstinate, and encouraged the good, and made it their business to advance God's glory, and to Maintain the true Worship of the living God ; nor will Subjects be excused here, neither must they think to come off without making distinct Answers to these Interrogatories ; whether they have obeyed, not only for Wrath, but for Conscience-sake ; whether they have behaved themselves peaceably under the Government they have lived under ; whether they have paid Tribute to whom Tribute was due, Honour to whom Honour ; and whether they have not used their Liberty for a Cloak of Malicioufness.

In the same manner, Parents will be strictly examined, whether they have brought up their Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord ; Children, whether they have honoured their Parents as become Persons, who under God owed their being to them ; Servants, whether they served their Masters according to the Flesh in singleness of Heart, as unto Christ : And likewise all other Persons according to the Relations and Offices they stood in ; for in all these Relations, Men are Stewards, and both Reason, and Gods Justice, and

and his Word require, that all should give an Account of their Stewardship.

At this time, the Soul being thoroughly awaken'd from her former Lethargy, every Sin will appear more dreadful, every Error more red, every Fault more bloody, every Offence blacker than Ordinary ; for the fire of that Day doth not only scorch, but enlighten and elevate the Soul into a thinking state, and none of the former Impediments will now be able to divert her Thoughts, which will be fix'd upon an offended God, and his Majesty, Greatness and Holiness, and make at this time more sensible Impressions on her, while every thing, especially, what hath been committed against God, will appear in more lively Colours ; and consequently, if the Conscience hath not the remembrance of a former sincere Repentance to support her self withal, the Frights must necessarily be great, and the whole Frame sink into inexpressible Confusion.

There are innumerable Sins, which neither Prince, nor Magistrate can take notice of: How many Poor are oppressed? How many innocent Men wrong'd daily? A *Socrates* is abused, and hath no helper ; but neither this Man's Misery, nor the others Oppression shall escape the Eyes of that all-seeing Judge, who will infallibly



Publish both the one and the other, and make good the Type St. John speaks of, Rev. 6. 5. *And I beheld a black Horse, and he that sate on him had a pair of Ballances in his Hand; Ballances to Weigh every Man's evil Works, which if they be found to preponderate above the good, or to be pure Sins, pure Offences, without a godly sorrow to take off either the Colour or the Weight, all will be turned into blackness and desolation.*

3. In the Prospect of this Judgment, there appears a very wonderful Scene; the same Person that is the Judge, is the Law-giver too, the Party offended, the Witness, and his own Advocate: He that shall sit on the Tribunal in that Day, was the Person that came down from Heaven, and blessed the World with the equitable Precepts of the Gospel; it's he that went up into a Mountain, and from that Pulpit pronounced. *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; Blessed are they that Mourn, for they shall be comforted; Blessed are the Meek, for they shall Inherit the Earth; Blessed are they which Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled, &c. Matth. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.* It's he that came to undeceive both the Jewish and Heathen World in the false Notions they had imbibed concerning their Duty,

Duty, and cleared the Moral Law of *Moses*, of the false Glosses the *Pharisees* had put upon it, explain'd the will of God, set it naked and pure before the People, he came to call to Repentance, and let them see what were the proper Preparatives for the everlasting Joys of Heaven : It's he who guarded the Law which he promulged with Sanctions suitable to his Majesty and Greatness ; and as he made the Rewards eternal, so the Punishments he threatned to the stubborn and impenitent were endless too ; So it became him who appeared in the World to offer infinite Mercy to Poor Sinners, to reveal to them Gods infinite Love to their Souls, and to acquaint them with the infinite condescension of the Son of God, who would humble himself to the Death of the Cross, to redeem them from the Bondage of the Devil.

He that came into this valley of Tears with so much love and light about him, might justly enjoin reformation of the whole Man, and a transformation of the Mind, and temper of the Soul, and require a conformity to his own Life, and insist upon Mens becoming Patient, and humble, and charitable, and contented, and peaceable, and watchful over their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, and

heavenly-minded : How could this Grace, which appeared to all Men, challenge less than Self-denial, and Contempt of the World, and living in the thoughts and expectation of a better Life, and seeking earnestly for glory, and honour, and immortality ?

And as he, that will be the Judge in that Day, is the Law-giver too, so he understands best the meaning of his Laws ; nor will Tricks, and Evasions, and false Constructions of those Laws signifie any thing before him, who will not depart from the sense his eternal Wisdom put upon them, and which by his Prophets and Ministers he once caused to be proclaim'd in the Ears of Men.

The Sinner in that Day, will not have to do with Deputies, and Lieutenants, and Delegates, who too often make the Law a Nose of Wax, and can turn and interpret it to what sense they please, and their Interest dictates ; are sometimes unskilful, and apt to mistake the Law of their Superiors ; and these Laws not being of their own making, are the colder, or the more remiss in executing them ; but here Men shall see the Law-giver himself, who will not be put off with Pretexts and Pretences, as ordinarily Deputies, and  
such

such Persons are, as are employ'd by the Supreme Law-givers in a Common-wealth or Kingdom.

Even here on Earth, where the Law-givers themselves sit Judges, the Malefactor must expect severer dealings; in this case, even *Lycurgus's* Wife shall not escape, that durst break her Husband's Law against riding in a Chariot during the time of Divine Service; and *Zaleucus*, his Son, must lose his Eye, for slighting his Father's Order against Adulterers; not to mention the Severities of *Manlius Torquatus*, *Epaminondas*, *Tenes*, &c. On their own Children where the Legislators have sat Judges of their Crimes and Errors.

The Almighty Judge in that Day will justly resent the Affront done to his Laws: He hath Reason to resent it; greater Reason than any Potentate in the World hath to take it ill that there Laws are set light by; God's Law being holy, and perfect, and infallible, and under an impossibility of Errour; and a Mercy it is, a wonderful Mercy, that he vouchsafes to give such a Law to the Children of Men; and a greater Mercy yet, that his Son came into the World to Publish it, and so many Thousand Messengers besides are sent to declare it, so that in this Affront Mercy and Goodness, as well as Justice, and



and Sovereignty, and Power, are wronged and abused; and as all Perfections in God are infinite, so whatever injury is offered to any of them, it receives a deeper Dye and greater aggravations from the Infinity of those Attributes; God, who is omniscient, sees the virulent nature of this Affront; and indeed none is better able to declare the heinousness of such contempt than he, and this must necessarily encrease the Terror of that Day.

And as he is the Law-giver, against whose Precepts the Sinner hath offended, so he is the Party offended too.

Sinner, this is he, whose Body and Blood thou hast so often receiv'd unworthily in the Sacrament; this is he, to whose Cross thou hast been an Enemy so many Years, on whose Merits thou hast trampled, whom thou hast so often crucified afresh, whose Temple thou hast defiled, whose House thou hast dishonoured, whose Gospel thou hast been ashamed of, and therefore wonder not, if such thundring Queries come forth from the Throne at last; dost not thou remember how oft thou hast broke through the Guards and Fences I have set betwixt thee and Sin? How couldst thou find in thy Heart to afflict and grieve me so often, who have endured such Agonies already

on the Cross? Why wouldst thou forsake me, the Fountain of Living Waters? How is it that thou wast not afraid to make thy Belly, thy Gold; thy Harlot, and such a great Man thy God? Did ever any Person oblige thee more than I? Didst thou ever receive such favours at any Man's Hand, as thou hast received at mine? And why could not I have thy Heart, and thy Will and Affections? Why must a sottish Lust and Passion engross thy Desires, and my Law be cast behind thee?

If ever Law-giver had reason to be offended, this Judge in the last Day hath; for his Commandments were not grievous, his Yoke was easie, and his Burthen light; all that was required, was Love; and it's hard, if so small a Tribute for his ineffable and incomprehensible Mercies must not be paid him. Its true, this Love must extend, and Branch it self into various Acts of Meekness, and Patience, and Humility, &c. But still where Love is the Principle, none of all the other things which are required, can seem tedious or difficult.

Nor is this all; for the same Judge will be Witness against the Sinner too: Indeed no Creature can be so true a Witness against him, as the Judge himself: There are many Sins no Creature ever saw, but he,

he, and therefore who so fit a Witness against those Crimes as he? *I will come near to you to Judgment, and I will be a swift Witness against the Sorcerers, and against the Adulterers, and against the false Swearers, and against those that oppress the Hireling in his Wages, the Widow, and the Fatherless, and that turn aside the Stranger from his Right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal. 3. 5.* This Judge sees all, nor will the Sinner be able to elude this Testimony of the invisible God. *When thou wast under the Fig-tree, I saw thee,* said Christ to Nathanael; his Conscience knew he had been there, and he believed. But this was in love.

In that Day we speak of, such Language as this will be pronounced in Wrath and Indignation, and therefore will cause other Thoughts in the Hearts of the Wretch that shall hear it; *Thou careless Creature, couldst thou imagine that any thing was hid from me? Did not I see thee at such a time, in such a place, in such a Garden, in such a Chamber playing the Rebel, and the Wanton? Did not I see thee treating with mine Enemies? Did not I see thee conspiring against me? Hadst not thou such base thoughts, such wicked intentions, such impure desires in such Company? I opened the Windows of Heaven, and looked upon thee, when thou wast committing Fornication*

cation with such a Woman : Wilt not thou believe me, who look'd within the Curtains, and saw thy Abominations ? Couldst thou think I would look on, and not set thy sins in order before thee ?

There will be no contradicting of this Testimony ; for thy Conscience, O Man, will immediately joyn issue with it, and say, as *Nathan* to the guilty King, *Thou art the Man*. For, besides this grand Witness, there will abundance of other Witnesses come in, which will all help to cast thy impenitent Soul ; thy Conscience here will have a great share in the Accusation ; that Conscience which once thou didst smother, and curb, and put by, when it pull'd thee by the Sleeve, and bid thee be Wise and Serious ; that Conscience that once bogled and winced, when thou offeredst violence to it, and said to thee, as the *Baptist* to *Herod*, it is not lawful for thee to Espouse this Sin ; that Conscience, which was aware of this Judgment, and gave thee warning, and could not with all the strongest Arguments it used, prevail with thee to stand in awe of God ; this, like one of *Job's* Messengers, when the House falls, and all these outward things are gone, alone escapes, to tell the Sinner of his Folly.

Con-



Conscience, even in this Life, doth sometime force the Guilty to make Confession of their Sins : It forced the Multitude that came to St. *John*, Matth. 3. 6. It forced *Judas* to cry, *I have betrayed Innocent Blood*, when no Creature prompted him to the Confession. It forced those who had used curious Arts, *Acts* 18. 18, 19. to bring their Schemes and Figures, and Astrological Tables, and Burn them before the Apostles of our Lord. How much greater then, may we suppose, will the force of it be in that Day, when Terror will surround it, when it will be readier to speak, and to accuse, than God to ask, and when no noise, no tumult, no croud, no business will be able to divert it?

With the Conscience, the Devils themselves will joyn, who are therefore emphatically called, *The Accusers of the Brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. These cannot but know our Sins, for they were the Tempters, and remember how we yielded, and consented to their suggestions. These were the constant and indefatigable Observers of our Lives. These watched our going out, and our coming in ; these were about us when we lay down, when we rose, when we walked, and when we sate, and whatever we did ; these were still

still at Hand to take notice of our doings, our words, and our behaviour; nor is their Memory so frail, as to forget it, nor their Malice so little, as to let it slip without making publication of it. These Rejoyce in our Ruine, and will be sure to make the worst Interpretation of our deportment. These are they that presented us with charming Objects, and were restless till they had made us enamoured with them, first drove us into the Snare, and now will be ready to accuse us for being taken. And therefore the Fathers, in their Discourses concerning this Day, do justly bring in the Devil, arguing, and pleading with the Almighty Judge, Behold these Men; its true, they were thine by Creation, but they became mine by Imitation of me; they had thy Image upon their Souls, but see, they have defaced that and chosen mine; thou didst Breath on them by thy holy Spirit, but they were more fond of my suggestions, than those motions. Thou didst indeed draw them with Cords of Love, and by Temporal and Spiritual Mercies soughtest to make them in love with thy Will, but they turned a deaf Ear to thy Call and Invitation; I never gave them any, nor promised them any thing, yet they served me like Slaves; thou courtedst them,  
and

and didst oblige them to love thee, yet they had rather be my Favorites than thy Darlings; if thou didst Command them any thing, that was against their Lusts, either they did nothing, or would be sure to provoke thee with their Inventions; I did but becken to them, and they flew to my Camp; nay, they were more Impudent than I, believed less than I, found out Sins I did not dream of, durst do more than I bid them; I bid them deny a thing, they had done; and they not only denied it, but Swore to it by all that's good and holy; I bid them take their ease and be merry, and they made themselves Swine; I bid them neglect God's Service on the Lord's Day, but they prophan'd it besides, by playing, and drinking, and other Enormities; I bid them keep what they had got, but they went beyond what I prompted them too, oppressed, cheated, dissembled, and made way to their Wealth through Oppression of the Widow and Fatherless. These therefore have my Image and Superscription, and consequently must be mine. I claim them as mine own; I challenge them as they are Apostates and Traytors to thee: It is thy Statute, which like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, is irrevocable, that those shall be despised, who did lightly esteem thee.

thee. Nor can God be worse than his Word, but must deliver up the Sinner, whom no Mercy could reform, to these Tormenters.

Nay, if we have oppressed any Persons, those very Persons will be Witnesses against us. *Abel* will in that Day bear Witness against *Cain* his Murderer; *Naboth* against *Abah*, whole Countries against their Tyrannical Princes; *Israel* against *Pharaoh*; in the same manner, those whom we have corrupted with Gifts or Moneys, or some other way, will stand up against us; *Herodias* against *Herod*; *Drusilla* against *Felix*; the Harlot against her *Inamorato*; *Helena* against *Paris*; *Danae* against *Jupiter*; and Men and Women perverted by Hereticks, against the Broachers of false Doctrines; and how can there be want of Witnesses, when our School-masters, our Parents, and other good men, whose Counsels we rejected, whose Admonitions we despised, and whose frequent Exhortations we laughed at, will be forced to speak what they know against us. Sinner, the Ministers of the Gospel, those who followed thee with Checks and Intreaties to be reconciled to God, will be obliged to speak of thy Stubbornness and Impenitence: Nay, this Pulpit, these Walls, these Stones, these Pews will cry out against thee!



*Iſa.* 1. 3. thee! Heaven and Earth are even in this Life called in as Witneſſes againſt the Monſters, who were more inconfiderate than the Ox or Aſs; much more in that Day, when God will bring every thing into Judgment, not only the ſinful Actions, but the very Places in which thoſe Actions were committed.

Such Witneſſes will be the Riches and Goods thou haſt abuſed; the Gold thou haſt ſpent upon thy Luxury, the Silver thou haſt thrown away in a Frolick, the Garments thou haſt abuſed to Pride, the Corn and Bread thou haſt play'd withal, the Hungry whom thou haſt not Fed, the Thirſty, to whom thou haſt not given Drink, the Naked, whom thou haſt not cloathed, when it lay in thy power; the Priſoners, whom thou haſt not viſited; theſe will all be Accuſers of thy Abuses and Uncharitableneſs. But the Accuſation of all theſe might yet be born with; it's the Teſtimony of the Judge, who ſhall approve of all that theſe Witneſſes aver; which appears moſt dreadful and terrible, and therefore certainly, the Proſpect of this Judgment is able to damp the greateſt Mirth and Senſuality.

And as this Judge will himſelf be Witneſs in that Day, ſo he will be his own Advocate too. To this purpoſe, ſaith the Pathetick *Nazianzen*; What ſhall we do,

my Friends, what shall we say, what Apology shall we make, when this Judge shall plead for himself in that Day? Thou disobedient Wretch, I made thee of Clay with mine own Hands, and breathed the Breath of Life into thee; I made thee after my Image, I gave thee Reason, and Understanding, and Power and Dominion over the Beasts of the Field; a Mercy, which if I had not vouchsafed unto thee, those Creatures, which are stronger than thou, would have master'd and destroy'd thee; I placed thee among the Pleasures of *Paradise*, made thee a Happy Inhabitant of *Eden*, and when thou wouldest needs hearken to the false and treacherous Suggestions of thy sworn Enemy, behold, in Pity and Commiseration to thee, I resolved to be Born of a Virgin, and accordingly took Flesh, and became Man for thy sake, was Born in a Stable, lay unregarded in a Manger, swaddled in Rags and Clouts, endured all the Reproaches and Injuries that Childhood is Subject to, bore thy Grievs, and assumed thy Infirmities, and was made like thy self, that thou mightest be like me in Felicity at the end of thy Race. I suffered Men to Trample on me, to buffet me, to spit in my Face, to give me Gall and Vinegar to Drink, to Scourge me,

me, to Crown me with Thorns, to Nail me to the Cross, and all this, that I might deliver thee from Eternal Contempt and Torments. Behold the Mark of the Nails which were struck into my Flesh. Behold my wounded Side; I suffered, that thou mightest Triumph; I died, that thou mightest live; was buried, that thou mightest rise; and made my self a scorn of the People, that thou mightest Reign in Heaven; and why wouldest thou throw away this Mercy? Why wouldest thou refuse this Treasure? What evil Spirit did possess thee to make light of these kindneses? Why wouldest thou pollute that Soul which I redeemed with mine own Blood? Why wouldest thou make thy Heart a Habitation of Devils, which I intended for my Throne? Why wouldest thou lose that which I purchased at so dear a rate? What Pleasure couldest thou take in doing that which cost me so many Sighs and Tears, and a bloody Sweat? why wouldest thou make a mock of so great a Mercy? How couldest thou undervalue a Favour of that importance and consequence? Can any Hell be thought too much for such Stubbornness? Either thou didst believe, that thy God did all this for thee, or thou didst not: If thou didst not believe it, why didst thou

thou make Confession of it with thy Mouth? If thou didst, how couldest thou be so ungrateful? How couldest thou abuse a Friendship of that Worth and Value? Thou lovest a Friend, a Neighbour, a Man, a Woman, for Kindnesses, which are meer Shadows, and Bubbles to my Love, and hadst not thou reason to love me beyond all earthly Comforts? Hadst not thou reason to prefer my Favour before the Smiles of a transitory World? How did I deserve such preposterous usages at thy Hands? Couldest thou have dealt worse with a Slave, or with an Enemy, than thou hast done with me? Did this condescension deserve, dost thou think, such Affronts and Injuries, such Contempt and Disobedience, as thou hast returned to me? Therefore, as for those mine Enemies, which would not have this Man to Reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

All this appears in the Prospect of a future Judgment, and therefore there must be Vertue in it, to check that Mirth and Jollity, which infatuates Souls, and leads them into Ruine.

4. In the Prospect of this future Judgment, there appears the unspeakable Anguish and Misery of those who have been most jolly and merry in this Life.

*Dives,*



*Dives*, who cloath'd himself in Purple and fine Linnen, and fared sumptuously every Day, appears there quaking, and trembling, and crying, *Father Abraham, Have Mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue*; his Tables, which were overlaid with Silver, his richer Beds, his Tapestry, his Ornaments, his Ointments, his Balsams, his Cordials, his delicate Wines, his various Dishes, his Cooks, his Flatterers, his Parasites, his Retinue, his Servants, and all the Noise and Pomp that attended him, are not only extinct, and turned into Ashes, and Dust, and Dirt, but his naked Soul is dragg'd and carried before a tremendous Majesty, to endure intolerable Torments; and before this Terrible God he appears with his Eyes cast down, blushing and ashamed, trembling and fearful, and all his former Comforts seem to have been but Dreams to him.

See how the Scene is changed; he to whom the Poor Man formerly supplicated for Relief, now is forced to supplicate to the Poor Man to be relieved of him, and would be glad of *Lazarus's* Table, who once scorned to let *Lazarus* gather the Crumbs that fell from his; when *Lazarus* was near him, he slighted him; now he is afar off, he adores him, and himself  
now

now is the Poor Man, while *Lazarus* Swims in Riches ; such a discovery doth that last Day make, who are the Rich, and who are the Poor, who the Wise, and who the Fools.

In this Judgment *Nimrod*, *Senacherib*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, *Tiberius*, *Nero*, *Domitian*, Men who would be thought Gods, and denied themselves in no Pleasure their Fancies craved, stand all ashamed and confounded, Flames of a Guilty Conscience burning in their Breasts, and forcing their Voices into bitter Lamentations ; there *Sardanapalus*, *Cræsus*, *Cambyses*, *Herod*, and all the Mighty Men, that spared no Woman in their Lust, and no Man in their Anger, appear all like Guilty Malefactors, their Hearts failing them for fear, and they chattering like a Dove, and bewailing their airy, short and transitory satisfactions, and cursing the Hour and the Minute when the first Temptations courted them to those dangerous Embraces ; there *Cleopatra*, that sailed in a Vessel glistering with Gold, a Vessel fitted for Pride, and Luxury, and Magnificence, and tried how far Sensuality might be improved, and to what Height brutish Pleasure might be advanced ; there the wretched Woman is seen, not so much with Ser-

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pents

pents clasping about her Breast, as with a Worm within, that dies not, Tormenting her awakened Conscience with shapes of Death, and Images of Ruine, and all the Beasts, that here could not be satisfied with Pleasure, there cannot be eased of gnawing Vultures and Agonies ; for these the just God must at last inflict, to make them sensible that his Threatnings were no Fables, and to let them see, that the Advices of wise Men and Philosophers, who exhorted them to the Study of Virtue, were grounded on rational Foundations.

These Tortures and Vexations must not expire till the Ancient of Days, who was affronted by their Sins, doth die, and that's never, he being the same yesterday, to day, and for ever : Thus their sweet Meat must have sour Sauce, and if they will have their Pleasures, they must feel the Sting too, that's inseparably affix'd to them. The Bait cannot be swallowed without the Hook, and as Pleasant as the Honey is, the Gall which is part of it, must be tasted too. God will not be always mocked, and they that durst in despite of his Will and Prohibitions, feed upon that luscious Fruit, shall feel the smart of the Prickles too.

In this Judgment their Postures, Gestures, and Behaviour and Deportment appear in another Figure, and they that before laugh at the Thunders of the Law, made light of the Threatnings of the Gospel, and let the Warnings of the Ministers of the Gospel go in at one Ear, and out at another, now call themselves Fools and Sots for doing so ; and they that before thought of no after-reckoning, now fall a wishing, but in vain ; O that I had been wise ! O that I had bethought myself ! O that I had looked beyond this World ! O that I had believed ! O that I had retired, and considered what these Satisfactions would end in ! Fool that I was, to think that God would prove a Liar ! Where was my Reason, to think, that all that the Wisest and Holiest Men have said, were but Dreams and idle Tales ! I that might have been a Terror to Devils, how am I become their Scorn ! I, that might have been a Favourite of God, how am I become his Enemy ! I, that might have triumphed with other Saints, how am I fallen from their Bliss ! O what would not I give to be rid of the Torment I feel ! Help, Help, ye Souls that have any Pity in you : I sink under the Weight of my former pleasures ; they are loathsom to me ; they appear Mon-

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sters,



sters, Furies, hideous things to me ! Cursed be that Bed on which my Wickedness was Wrought ! O that my Tongue had Dropt out of my Head when I pleased my self with lascivious Discourses ! O that I had been Deaf when I was tickled with hearing a smutty Jest ! O that I had been struck Blind, when with Joy and Satisfaction I beheld that charming Beauty ! O that my Feet had failed me when I was going into that jovial Company ! O that I had locked my self up, that I might not have seen those Temptations which enticed me ! O that I had spent those Hours I threw away in Carding and Dicing, and Drinking and Revelling ! O that I had spent them in holy Contemplations of the Vanity of these sublunary Objects ; Now I would do it, and it is too late ; Now I would Repent, and it profits me not ; now I would be serious, and it signifies nothing ; my Time is lost ; the Day of Grace is gone ; the Opportunities are past : O that I could tear out this Heart ! O that I could pull out these Eyes ! O that I could dispatch my self ! O that I had a Sword, that I might put a period to this miserable Condition ! I see nothing but Ruine before me, nothing but Darkness, nothing but Confusion, nothing but Horrors, and no Creature will help me to  
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annihilate my self; I am not able to endure this Torture for a Moment, how shall I be able to endure it to infinite Millions of Ages? I see no end of it; the farther I look, the more of my Misery I see: Where-ever I cast my Eyes, I see nothing but Terror, Devils, and miserable Souls in the same Condition with my self, all howling about my Ears: A thing so far from affording Comfort, that it fills me with greater Horror. Whither shall I flee for remedy? Heaven is shut up; there is a vast Gulph betwixt me and that; there is no passing from hence thither, nor from thence to this doleful place: I swim in a Sea of Sorrow, I swim, and see no Shoare; I labour, and not a Plank appears, on which I may save my Life; here are no Hills, no Mountains, no Rocks I can Cry to; and if there were, they are all Deaf; God hath forsaken me, and good reason; for I left him for a Lust, and undervalued him for Trifles: I pleaded, I could not withstand the Charms the World offered to me: Madman! I could withstand them now, why could not I have withstood them then? I might have considered of this Place, and of this State, and of these Vexations, and checked my self: O that I were but to live again in the World! O that God

would but try me again ! How would I scorn the very thoughts of Mirth and Raillery ! How would I run away from the very Mention of these Impostures ! Break my Heart, Break ! If God will not Kill thee, call upon the infernal Spirits, and see what they will do : But oh, they delight in these Groans ! Themselves lie under the same Condemnation, banish'd from the gracious Presence of God ; they would die as well as I, if they were able : O what a Torment is it ! I see the everlasting Joys before me, and cannot reach them ; they are over my Head, and I cannot come near them ; Paradise I see, but cannot enter into it : I knock my Head, I smite my Breast, I stamp with my Feet, but am never the better. That *Jesus*, on whose Blood I trampled, I see rejoycing with his Followers at the Right Hand of God, and not a drop of Comfort drops from his Lips, on mine ! I feel Flames within, which no Waters can quench ; a Drop of Water would be some refreshment, and give me some hopes of ease ; but here is none : All the Rivers of Consolation are dried up to me ; I walk in Darkness, I see not Light : O God, tear the Heavens, and come down ! Canst thou hear these shrieks, and be un-

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unconcerned? Canst thou see this Poor Creature lie in Torments, and give no relief? Hast thou no Mercy left? O then my State is desperate! I shall not be able to refrain from Blasphemy; for I see none can help but thou, and thou wilt not; I Rave, I am distracted with Fear; I Tremble, I Quake; stand off Devils! I have Furies enough within: Ye damned Pleasures, whither have you brought me? Ye have made me lose the Favour of him who alone is able to give me ease! I might have been Happy, if it had not been for you; I might have escaped these Regions of Anguish, if you had not tempted me: But why do I accuse you? This brutish Heart of mine was in the Fault, my devilish Lust hurried me into Ruine; I had Reason, and would not use it; Means of Grace, and would not apply them; Offers of Mercy, and would not accept of them, *O all ye that pass by, behold and see, if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, which is done unto me, where-with the Lord hath afflicted me, in the Day of his fierce Anger; from above he hath sent a Fire into my Bones, and it prevails against them; he hath spread a Net for my Feet, he hath turned me back, he hath made me desolate, and faint all the Day; the Yoak of my Transgressions is bound by his Hand, they*

Lam. i. 12,  
13, 14.



*are wreathed, and come up upon my Neck, he hath made my Strength to fall, the Lord hath deliver'd me into their Hands from whom I am not able to rise up.*

All this certainly appears in the Prospect of that future Judgment, and consequently is enough to Check and Damp the greatest Jollities on this side Hell ; and though it's true, that it doth not cause the least disturbance in Thousands of Men, that drink of these stollen waters ; for Men in this Age are as jovial as ever, and a Judgment to come frights them no more than an House on Fire a Thousand Miles off ; but sure this is for want of taking the proper way and method, which God and Reason doth prescribe ; and what that way and Method is, shall be shewn in the following Paragraph.

3. How the Prospect of that future Judgment must be managed, that it may actually Damp and put a stop to these carnal Delights.

This is to be done no other way, but,

1. By thinking, reflecting and ruminating upon that future Judgment. This stands to Reason ; for except things be made Visible to us, how shall they move or Fright us ? This future Judgment being out of sight, and afar off, it must be brought near, and set before us ; and  
there

there is no way to do it but by thinking. Our Thoughts are the Picture-drawers, which make the Land-skip of that Judgment so lively, that our Faculties cannot but be signally affected with it. These are the Divine Part within us, which can make things past and future, as present, and summon the remotest Objects to become familiar and palpable. These are the Glasses in which all that God hath said, or promised, or threatned, becomes Visible, and with the help of these we may make that Substance, which seemed but Air before, and condense that into solid Notions, which to a carnal Man seemed but Fancy and Wind before. These can make us in a manner Grasp and Feel that which was out of our reach before, and make us concern'd about things which which we neither see, nor hear, nor feel with our grosser Organs. These can transplant the other World into this, and make Eternity appear before us, though we live in Tabernacles of Clay : To prove this, we need only appeal to Experience. Behold those pious Souls, that take a course contrary to that of the World ; What makes them afraid of sinning ? What makes them afraid of running with their Neighbors into Riot ? What makes them that they dare not do what some of their Car-

nal Acquaintance and Relations do? What makes them Mourn? What makes them Rejoyce in Spirit? You see nothing that they have Reason to mourn for: They have a competency, they want nothing in the World, they have Necessaries and Conveniencies, and they prosper in their lawful Undertakings; and under some of their greatest Afflictions, you see nothing that should make them chearful, no outward cause of their Joy, but rather all that is about them is an Invitation to Sorrow and Dejection: Why? They are invisible things, that make them Mourn and Rejoyce, and by thinking of them, they make them visible, that they are affected with them as much as other Men are with Objects that incur into their Senses; by thinking they see the Terrors of the Lord, and the Affronts they have offered to the Divine Majesty, and the Wounds they have given to their own Souls, and that makes them Weep; by thinking they see the Glory that is set before them, and the Recompence which is promised them, and the Right and Title they have to it, and that makes their Soul Rejoyce: So then, by thinking this future Judgment may be seen, and if it be seen in any lively Colours, there is no Sinner so stout, no Man so perverse, no Creature

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ture so dull and stupid, but it will startle him, and put *Wormwood* into his Cup. When I eat, or drink, or whatever I do, the last Trumpet sounds in mine Ears, and I think I hear the Terrible Voice of the Arch-angel, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment*, saith St. Hierom: these Thoughts made him eat and drink with great Moderation: These brought a holy Fear upon him in all his Actions: These struck Seriousness into him in all places: These made him as circumspect in the Market-place, as if he had been at Church, and as devout in the Street, as if he had stood at the High Altar. And therefore I do not wonder at that *Hermit*, that he became so serious a Man as Antiquity reports him, who carried a little Book about him, consisting only of Four Leaves, in which he was always seen reading, and after reading, meditating; in the first Leaf was expressed *Christ's Passion*, and what that Darling of Mankind suffered for poor Mortals, during his abode in the World; in the Second, was represented the Process of the future Judgment, with the Terrors and Consternations that guilty Men will be in at that time; in the Third, were described the Glories of Paradise, and of that Third Heaven which all holy Souls shall enter into, there to possess the Inheritance of



of the Saints in light ; in the Fourth, was drawn to the life the Picture of Hell, and of the Miseries which shall await the Stubborn and Impenitent in the next life ; these Four Leaves were soon read over, but they afforded infinite Matter for Thoughts and Meditations ; and by these his Soul was so warmed, that he cared not what became of him here, so he might but enjoy the promised Glory, and that Life and Immortality Christ had brought to light by the Gospel.

So true is that Saying of St. *Chrysostom* ;

*Chrysost. Hom. 2.*  
*in 2 Thessalon.*

There is no Man that thinks much of Hell, that will ever fall into it ; as indeed there is no Man who makes light of it, that will ever escape it. For as it is among Men, they that are afraid of the Penalties of the Law, seldom or never feel them ; for their Fear makes them shun those Actions which deserve them : This keeps them from Theft and Rapine, from Murder and Adultery, from Burglary and Wrong, from Violence and Oppression, and consequently from the Punishments the Law inflicts in such Cases. The Plagues and the Stripes they fear, make them cautious, and whatever their inclination may be, the Rods and Axes they fear,

fear, restrain them ; whereas those that are regardless of the Mule, bring it upon themselves ; so it is here, the frequent thinking of it, is the best Antidote against the Terrors of that future Judgment: If the *Ninivites* had not feared their overthrow, they had certainly been overthrown; and how could they have feared it, if they had not thought of it ? If the Men that lived before the Flood, had thought of it, and been afraid, they would not have been drowned ; nor would the People of *Sodom* have been consumed by Fire, if they had taken this Course ; It's a great Misfortune not to think of the fulfilling of Gods Threatnings ; for he that thinks not of it, of all Men, will be the first that shall have woful experience of it.

It is reported of *Agatho*, That in his last Sickness, falling into a Trance for Three Days together, he lay with his Eyes fixed upon Heaven, and all that time look'd very ghastly ; recovering out of the Extasie, and being asked by his Friends, where he had been, and what his Thoughts had been during those Three Days, and what made him look so strangely ? O my Friends, said he, Do you ask me where I have been ? Alas ! I have been these Three Days standing before the great Tribunal, and seen how the most  
just

just Judge sentenced divers Souls to Eternal Darknes; and who would not stand amazed at the dreadful Spectacle?

It was therefore a very good Prayer of St. Ambrose: I do most vehemently desire, O Lord, that thou wouldest be pleased to imprint, and very deeply imprint the Landskip of the future World, the Miseries of the Disobedient, the Groans of the Stubborn, the Agonies of the Impenitent, the Shrieks of the Profane, the Vexations of Hypocrites, the Fears of the Careless, the Destruction of the Covetous, the Perdition of Worldlings, the Flames of the Revengeful, the Terror of Damnation, and Eternal Torments, and the future Felicity of thy Kingdom, upon my Mind; for it is impossible that he that thinks much of these things, should not become thy Child and Servant, and one of those whom thou hast predestinated to Eternal Life.

Dost thou Laugh, said the Old Man in *Ruffinus*, to a Youngster (whose Behaviour was very light) when you and I are to be judged before Heaven and Earth? And indeed that Person that surveys what the Divine Jesus hath said of this future Judgment, thinks how in that Day the Powers of Heaven will be shaken, the Sun turned into Darknes, the Moon into Blood, and the Stars forbear to give their Light, how the World, and all the Elements

ments will be on Fire, the Universe melt-like Wax, the Earth be burnt up, the Seas dried, and the Rivers consumed, and with what Glory and Bravery the once afflicted Son of God will then appear, with an Army of Angels about him, displaying their Banners, and carrying the Sign of the Son of Man before him; how before him all Nations will be assembled, and all that are in their Graves, upon hearing the Voice of God, loud as Thunder, and more dreadful too, will be summoned to appear before his Bar, the Judge shining in his Meridian-glory, brighter than *Moses*, clearer than the Sun, and how the Consciences of guilty Men will quake at this Sight, their Hearts misgiving them, that their Portion will be in outward Darkness, how formidable all the Transactions will be, how immutable the Sentence, after it is once passed, not to be altered, or deprecated by Saints or Angels, how all Evasions and Subterfuges will be out of Doors there, and all possibility of transferring our Errors upon others, who have been Partners with us in our Sins, will Vanish, how those that make themselves Fools for Christ's sake in this Life, were reproached, reviled, derided, and laughed at for their Severities, would not lose their Souls for a Trifle, nor sell  
their



their Birthright to Eternal Bliss for a Morfel of Meat, would hold fast their integrity, tho' solicited by innumerable Losses and Crosses, and by their nearest Relations to Curse God and die ; how these who were here made the Off-scourings of all things, will then be absolved and quitted, and have Seats appointed them in the Mansions of Glory, there to Reign, and sing the Goodness of God to all Eternity. \* I say, he that seriously surveys these things, if he be a Person who hath not debauch'd or lost his Reason, cannot but be affected by passages of this Nature, and think it time to curb himself in his sensual Delights and Satisfactions. But,

2. Bare thinking is not enough, but the Particulars of this future Judgment must be actually applied to our selves ; General things, and what is done to others, though they may touch the Heart, yet do not subdue it till particular applications give them force and power. A Fire, that is a Mile off from me, tho' it causes in me some sence of the Calamity, yet if it threatens the House I live in, my Faculties soon bestir themselves, and I fall to Work, and secure my self in good earnest ; so here, when I behold the tremendous Process of this Judgment, I must reflect, that as God deals with others, so he

he will certainly deal with me ; that I have no greater privilege than others, but must stand and fall by the same Law that they stand and fall by ; that to fancy any more favourable proceedings towards me, than God intends to others, is but a Dream, and contrary to the impartiality of the Judge ; that as I have a Soul to be saved as well as my Neighbour ; so God will expect I should live here, as he bids my Neighbour live, that neither my Estate, nor Dignity, neither my Offices, nor Friends, neither my Riches, nor my Greatness, will excuse my living more carelessly than my poorer Friends ; nay, that my outward Advantages make my Account greater ; and as I have had greater Talents bestowed upon me, so more will be required of me than of them who have not had these opportunities of being good and holy, which I have had ; that as God hath advanced me in the World, placed me in a higher station, given me a considerable Figure here on Earth, made his Candle to shine upon me, caused my Root to spread by the Waters, and the Dew of Heaven to lie all Night upon my Branch, and afforded me Credit and Respect among Men, so he looks for greater Fruitfulness in good Works, and more than ordinary exemplariness to advance his

his Glory, and to spread the Power of Religion among my Inferiours and Dependants; and therefore upon a view of this future Process, I must needs rouse my Soul by such Questions as these;

If God be resolved to judge the Secrets of Mens Hearts according to his Gospel, what will become of me? Should God call thee to Judgment, O my Soul, this Night, or this Hour, art thou in a Condition to appear before so great, so dreadful a God? Is this Foolery thou pleasest thy self with, this wanton Dress, this jolly Life, these merry Hours, this Gaming, this Carousing, this extravagant Laughter, this Fondness of the Humour of the Age, this immodest and frothy Talk, this foolish Garb, this phantastick Fashion, this mispending thy Time, this keeping of Vain Company, this unprofitable way of Living, this thy being intent altogether upon the Profits and Pleasures of the World, this indifferency in Religion, these faint Resistances of Temptations, this neglect of known Duties, this unfaithful Discharge of the Duties of thy Relations, this unwillingness to mind any thing that's serious, this Aversion from Spiritual Discourses and Actions, this want of Gravity, &c. Are these fit Wedding-garments to come before the King of Heaven

Heaven in ? Thou maist be summon'd to come to his Bar within this Day or Two ; think what an infinite Majesty thou must be presented to : Should God speak the Word within a few Minutes, *Come away, come away, and give an Account of thy Behaviour ;* how unprepared art thou ? So great is thy danger, and canst thou loiter ? So near art thou to a tremendous Eternity, and Oh wilt not thou be clean ? Thou standest upon the brink of Hell, and wilt not thou step back ? Thou art within a Bows-shot of the great Tribunal, and doth not thy Countenance change ? Thou art within hearing of the Thunders, that come forth from the Throne of God, and do not thy thoughts trouble thee ? Thou seest the fatal Hand upon the Wall, and do not thy Knees smite one against another ? Thou must shortly appear before all the Host of Heaven, and art not thou got farther yet in Holiness ? Dost not thou quake to think, that the Revenger of Blood is upon thy Heels ?

As thou art a Christian, thou art a Son of God, and dost thou express that filial disposition in thy Gate, and Looks, and Face, and Life ? Art thou Born of God, and canst thou degenerate from his Nature ? Art thou made after his Image, and by Grace renew'd after his Similitude, and



and canst thou be contented under a temper so different from that Holiness, which is thy great Father's Perfection and Glory? Does God expect thee at his Tribunal with the Qualifications of a Child, and wilt thou appear before him as a Rebel? Hath he given his Son on purpose to adopt thee, and thinkest thou to present thy self before him in the Shape of a Prodigal? Thou art designed for a Citizen of the Celestial *Jerusalem*, and wilt thou appear before him as an Inhabitant of Hell? Thou art one of God's Family, and wilt thou appear before him as a Traytor? Thou art purchased by his Blood, and wilt thou live as if that Blood had been spilt in vain? Thou art wash'd in the Laver of Regeneration, and canst thou wallow with the Swine in the Mire? Thou hast known the Way of Righteousness, and wilt thou with the Dog return to the Vomit? Or art thou not afraid of *Rev 22. 15.* that Saying, that Dogs must stand without?

Thou art called to be faithful, and hast given thy Faith to God; Wilt thou break thy Faith, and hope to be guiltless at this Bar? Will not God revenge this Breach, or canst thou think he will let thee go unpunish'd for thy Treacheries? How canst thou expect the performance of his pro-

Promises, while thou art so false to thy Engagements? Thou hast vow'd thy self to him both in Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, and canst thou imagine, that thy Perjuries will not be remembred when thou comest to look the Judge in the Face? By giving thee Opportunity of becoming a Christian, God hath made thee a King, and wilt thou run to the Bramble, and say, Come thou and Reign over me? As a King, thou hast Power given thee to Vanquish Flesh and Blood, to tread upon Lions and Adders, to defie Principalities and Powers, and to Crush Devils, and wilt thou make thy self a Slave to those Enemies, over which God hath given thee Power to trample them under thy Feet? As a King thou art to appear before him, and wilt thou come in the posture of a miserable Vassal? Shall those Passions rule over thee which thy God hath given thee for Servants and Hand-maids? And what a dismal Sight will it be, when thou art to come before the Throne laden with conquests, to appear fettered with Chains and the Devils Trophies? God designs thee to be his Priest; This is one of the Privileges that came by the Blood of Christ: But where are thy Sacrifices? The Sacrifice of fervent Prayer, the Sacrifice of an Humble and Contrite Heart, the Sacrifice of

of Praise, and Delight in God? And wilt thou come without the Mark of thy Office before the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls? Thou art enlightned by the Spirit of God, and dost thou think to live in Darkness, and after all to share in the boundless Inheritance with the Children of Light? How unlike thy self wilt thou appear before God, if thou come without these Qualifications? Thou art a Christian, but where is the Life of Christ that should be in thee? Will the Judge ever take thee for his Sheep, when it's evident, thou dost not hear his Voice? How ridiculous is that Man that hangs out a Bush, and yet hath no Wine to sell? And how foolish is that Apothecary that Writes glorious Names upon his Pots, when the Rich Drugs that are named, have no being in his Shop? And will it not tend to thy everlasting Confusion that thou hast had the Name of a Christian, and done nothing like a Christian?

Thus the particular Proceedings of that future Judgment must be applied to our selves, if we resolve that the Prospect of a future Judgment shall damp our carnal Delights and Satisfactions, and without using this Method, we do but trifle, and talk of breeding Mountains, and bring forth ridiculous Mice; play with Religion,

gion, and are not in good earnest, when we say, we believe a future Account.

3. But neither the Reflections aforesaid, nor the Application we have spoken of, will make any deep Impression, except all be seconded with earnest prayer, that God by his holy Spirit working in our Minds, would make the Attempt effectual; this must set to the Seal, drive in the Nail, and clench it. The Eternal Spirit must give Success to these Enterprises, and in vain do we plant or water, except he gives the Increase. He is that anointing, which must supple the Soul, and Crown all with Laurels and Victory. By strength of Thought, and Application, the Fort of Sin may be assaulted; but without this Spirit lends his helping Hand, it will never be taken or subdued. His Power must overcome the Oppositions our Flesh and the World will certainly make in this case, and if he blows upon our Hearts, the strong Holds of Iniquity, like the Walls of *Jericho*, will fall, and nothing can stand before him, and he will certainly come in to our assistance, if our Prayer and Addresses be fervent and importunate. Upon such Devotions, the frequent Discourses of this Day of Judgment, we read or hear, will be so far from bringing the thing into contempt with



with our Souls, that our Hearts will be awakened more, and it's impossible, we can miscarry in the pious Design, if with strong cries we apply our selves to him, who hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all Men, in that he hath raised him from the Dead, *Acts 17. 31.*

That which we are chiefly to insist upon in these Addresses, is, that we may get lively Apprehensions of that Day, and such Apprehensions, as no Pleasure, no Folly, no Temptation of the World may darken or destroy; And here let the Soul break forth into such Ejaculations:

‘ O God, great and glorious, make  
 ‘ me deeply sensible of that Day, and of  
 ‘ that Hour, when the Son of Man will  
 ‘ come, when the Goats shall be separated from the Sheep, the Tares from the  
 ‘ Wheat, the Good from the Bad; when  
 ‘ neither Prayers nor Tears shall be able  
 ‘ to deliver the guilty and polluted Soul  
 ‘ from the impendent danger; when it  
 ‘ shall be said to the humble, *Friend, sit*  
 ‘ *up higher*; and to the proud Fool, *Give*  
 ‘ *place to him that is more honourable than*  
 ‘ *thou art*; when the Book of Conscience  
 ‘ shall

shall be opened, and the Dead judged  
by the Contents of that Book ; when  
the Sinner will not know where to flee,  
and his Spirits will fail him, for fear of  
him that sitteth upon the Throne.

O God ! Fix these considerations in  
my Soul ; strengthen my Faith, that  
I may believe these things unseen, with-  
out wavering. How apt is the World  
to get between this tremendous Day,  
and my Sight ? Quickened thou mine  
Eyes, that I may see through all impe-  
diments into that Process, and reflect,  
what manner of Person I ought to be in  
all holy Conversation and Godliness.  
Lord Jesu ! great Judge of the World !  
let the Lines of that Judgment be Writ-  
ten so legibly in my Mind, that my  
Soul may Delight to Read them, that  
nothing may divert me from studying  
and considering them ; let this be my  
chief Study, and let me feel the same  
effect, that those Men did, who were  
converted at thy Apostles Sermon ; let  
me be prickt at the Heart, and cry  
out, *What must I do to be saved ?* Let the  
thoughts of this Day make a Reforma-  
tion in my outward and inward Man,  
that it may appear, that thou hast  
touch'd me with a Coal from the Altar.  
O God, to whom Vengeance belongs,

‘ shew thy self, and disperse my foolish  
‘ Desires. Let my Soul feel the Transa-  
‘ ctions of that Day as well as believe  
‘ them. Clear my Understanding, and  
‘ enlighten my Mind, that I may have a  
‘ livelier Prospect of it. I will not let  
‘ thee go except thou bless me: Look  
‘ down from the Habitation of thy Holi-  
‘ ness, and Visit my Soul. Expel the  
‘ Prejudices I have against Severity of  
‘ Life, and with the Thoughts of this Day  
‘ destroy them utterly. Let the Consid-  
‘ eration of this Day so Work upon me,  
‘ that my Ambition, Covetousness, Pride,  
‘ and Anger may Tremble at this Sight,  
‘ and leave their Habitation, and may be  
‘ ever afraid of returning. Oh tell me,  
‘ that this Day will certainly come, and  
‘ that the Day of my Death will be the  
‘ Emblem of it. Oh assure me of the  
‘ Terror of that Day, that shall Burn like  
‘ an Oven, wherein all that do wicked-  
‘ ly shall be Stubble, and the Fire shall  
‘ Burn them up, that it shall leave them  
‘ neither Root nor Branch; let me not take  
‘ example by the careless World, that put  
‘ this evil Day far from them. Let it be  
‘ always before me: Let my Mind be  
‘ never free from the Contemplations of  
‘ it. Let it mingle with my Business,  
‘ with my Meals, with my Converse,  
with

' with my Sleep, and with all my Under-  
 ' takings. In every Sin I am tempted to,  
 ' let it frighten me in my going out and in  
 ' my coming in, let it continually beat  
 ' upon my Mind. Oh my Lord ! let me  
 ' muse upon this Day of Retribution, this  
 ' Day of Recompence, this Day of Trou-  
 ' ble, this Day of Terror, this Day of  
 ' Joy, this Day of Comfort, this Day  
 ' wherein thy Promises and Threatnings  
 ' will be fulfilled, this Day which must  
 ' decide the controversie of my Life and  
 ' Death, this Day which will bring to light  
 ' all hidden things, this Day which will  
 ' revive the good, and confound the bad ;  
 ' this Day of Consolation, this Day of  
 ' Consternation, let me ruminate upon it,  
 ' till thoughts of this Judgment prevail  
 ' with me to become a new Creature ;  
 ' thy Grace must melt my stubborn Heart ;  
 ' without thee I can do nothing. O re-  
 ' lieve me ! O come in with the Light of  
 ' thy Countenance ! Stir up my Soul, and  
 ' rouse it from its carelesness ! Call to me  
 ' as thou didst to thy People of Old : Let  
 ' that Voice sound in my      Zeph. 1. 14, 15,  
 ' Ears, *The great Day of the*      16, 17, 18.  
 ' Lord is near, it is near,  
 ' and hasteth greatly, even the Voice of the  
 ' Day of the Lord ; the mighty Man shall cry  
 ' bitterly ; that Day is a Day of Wrath, a



' Day of Trouble and Distress, a Day of Wast-  
 ' ness and Desolation, a Day of Darknes and  
 ' Gloominess, a Day of Clouds, and thick Dark-  
 ' ness, a Day of the Trumpet, and Alarm against  
 ' the fenced Cities, and against the high Tow-  
 ' ers, and I will bring Distress upon men, that  
 ' they shall walk like Blind Men, because  
 ' they have sinned against the Lord, and their  
 ' Blood shall be poured out as Dust, and their  
 ' Flesh as the Dung; neither their Silver nor  
 ' their Gold shall be able to deliver them in the  
 ' Day of the Lord's Wrath.

' O let me not lose the sense of this  
 ' Day! Oh let me consider, how much  
 ' better it is to be humble and contemp-  
 ' tible, and to Hunger and Thirst, and  
 ' to suffer here, and afterwards to enter in-  
 ' to my great Masters Joy, than to be a  
 ' Slave to my Lusts and Pleasures here,  
 ' and to be Bound at last with everlasting  
 ' Chains of Darknes, Chains which never  
 ' wear out, Chains which always bind,  
 ' are always grievous, always painful; Oh  
 ' let me consider, how much better it is  
 ' to mourn here, and to water my Couch  
 ' with my Tears, and to afflict my Soul,  
 ' and after this, to triumph with the  
 ' Spirits of Men made perfect, than to  
 ' feed upon Pleasures, which at the best,  
 ' are but like the crackling of Thorns un-  
 ' der

‘ der a Pot, and then to be sent away to  
‘ howl with Devils: Help Lord, help,  
‘ that my Soul may be concern’d at her  
‘ danger, and despise the World, and pre-  
‘ pare against that Day, and encounter  
‘ with Powers, and Principalities, and  
‘ Spiritual Wickednesses in high Places; if  
‘ by any means I might attain unto the  
‘ Resurrection of the Dead.

Such Prayers offered from a Heart, that hath no Reserves; from a Heart, resolved to do any thing rather than miss of Salvation; such Prayers, I say, if they express the very desires of our Souls, will certainly put Death and Paleness into our sensual Pleasures, and oblige us to entertain other Thoughts of the gauds and gaieties of the World, than now we have, and make us sensible, that this casting such a Damp on the foolish Satisfactions of the Flesh with the Prospect of that Day, is not only a Task fit for Hermits, and Melancholick Scholars, and contemplative Men, but a Duty incumbent on all that carry Immortal Souls in their Breasts, which calls me to the Fourth Point.

4. Whether every Man is Bound to embitter his carnal Delights with this Prospect?

To this I must answer in the Affirmative: For though the Young Man be par-

ticularly mentioned here, yet since the expression in the Text reaches all Men who are fit for Action, all such must necessarily fall under the obligation of this Duty, and all that are capable of such Delights, are bound to make use of the aforesaid consideration, in order to this self-denial; if the young Man is obliged to this seriousness, much more older Men; if God will not allow of these delights in Youth, they must necessarily be intolerable in Years of greater Maturity; and if the tender Age be concerned to embitter them with this Prospect, when it meets with any Temptation to them; without all peradventure the stronger cannot be excused. And the Reasons are these following:

1. If they be not embitter'd with such Thoughts as these, they will infallibly lead the Soul into innumerable dangers; and there is no Man but is obliged to preserve his Soul from danger. It is said of the Prodigal, *Luke 15. 13.* That he took his Journey into a far Country; these sensual Pleasures alienated his Soul from God, drove it away from him, made him Travel as far as Hell; the Truth is, the Soul is lost in such sensual Pleasures, they wear out the bright Notions the Soul had of God and Religion; as it is said of the

*Sici-*

*Sicilian* Dogs, that running through the sweet and flowery Fields, they lose their scent in hunting; so the Soul, where these Pleasures, these white Devils become her Familiars, loses the noble Apprehensions it once had of God's Omniscience and Omnipresence, of his Holiness and Goodness, and of the truth of his Promises and Threatnings; and these Characters, like Letters written with bad Ink, vanish, and consequently the Life of the Soul; for which reason the Prodigal, who drowned himself in these delights, is said to be Dead, v. 32. These choak the good Seed that's sown in the noble Ground; and as you have seen a Field of Wheat, where the red Poppies spring up as fast as the richer Grain, though the proud Flowers are pleasing to the Eye, yet they retard and hinder the growth of the more useful Blade, and suck away the Moisture that should have fed the other; so sensual Delights, where they are taken in as Partners, and suffered to grow in the Soul, in which some Fruits of the Spirit do appear, in a short time blast those excellent Fruits, the Effects of the Holy Ghost, or Education, or the Ministry of the Word, and prove Bryars and Thorns, which will not suffer any of the better Corn to grow under them.



Man's Soul and Body are like two Buckets, while the one comes up full, the other goes down Empty : Carnal Delights advance the brutish or fleshly part, make it grow strong, lusty and vigorous, whereby it wrests the Scepter out of the Hand of Reason, and the Soul loses her Strength, and Power, and Sagacity in Spiritual things, grows Weak and Faint, and at last expires and dies ; I mean the vertuous Principles, which either kind Nature, or kinder Grace, or Afflictions, or some other Means and Instruments have incorporated with the Soul, which indeed are the Life of that excellent Creature ; and the Soul being thus Dead, it falls a Prey to Devils, who rejoyce over so great a Prey, and lead it in Triumph, take it Prisoner, and make it draw in their Victorious Chariot ; and now all the Curses of the Law are in force against it, the Threatnings of the Gospel become her Portion, and there is nothing left to stand betwixt her and eternal grief and anguish, but the slender Thred of this Mortal Life ; which, if it chance to break or tear, the Soul sinks irrecoverably into the Gulph of Perdition, from whence there is no returning ; so fatal is the influence of these flattering Guests, which in time starve their Keeper, and finding the House empty, sweep

swept and garnished, like the Evil Spirit spoken of, *Matth.* 12. 45. go and take with them seven other Spirits more wicked than themselves, and they enter in, and dwell there, and the last state of that Man is worse than the first; and thus they plunder, and boldly rob the Soul of her Riches, and hinder her from that Holiness which is her Food, her Cordial, and her greatest Support, and without which no Man can see the Lord; they had need therefore be embittered with something that's sour and unpleasant to Flesh and Blood, can finite the Stream, and turn those sweeter Waters into Blood, which nothing will do more effectually than the aforesaid Prospect.

2. This embittering of sensual and carnal Delights is a thing of the greatest concernment, and therefore must be necessary, and all must be concerned in the vertuous Enterprize; the greatest Blessings (the want of which make a Man perfectly miserable) depend upon it, even God's Love of Complacency, and the Application of Christ's Merits, and the Benefits of his Death and Passion; these belong not to the Soul, that is enamoured with sensual delights, no more than they appertain to Dogs or Swine; nay, they are useless and insignificant to such a Soul, as

much as the Mathematicks are to an Ass or Ideot. There is a perfect Antipathy betwixt these and the Comforts we speak of; for they are intended only for humble, broken, contrite hearts, which temper a Person that's fond of sensual delights is not capable of, nor can such a Man relish them, they are as Hay, and Straw, and Stubble to him, and like a Person, whose Appetite hath been spoiled by a raging Fever, he looks upon them as unsavoury and insipid food, and though he may talk of them, yet it is only as blind Men do of Colours. As it is in Nature, the Meat we eat must be agreeable to our Stomachs, so it is in Grace. There must be a holy Principle within, that makes these spiritual Comforts agreeable to it; but sensual delights destroy that Principle, and as Darkness drives out Light, so these two are incompatible; and indeed our blessed Saviour is very peremptory in his Assertion, that he who doth not deny himself, cannot be his Disciple, *Matth. 16. 24.* And what Self-denial can there be, where we do not deny our selves in that which is most pernicious to our better part? For so are these sensual delights: Not to be Christ's Disciple, is to have no part in him: Not to have any part in him, is to be none of his Sheep; and not to be of his  
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Sheep, is to be placed with the Goats at the left Hand in the last Day ; and what the consequence of that is, you may read, *Matth. 25. 41.*

It's true, maugre all that we can say to the contrary, Men who are resolved to indulge themselves in their brutish delights, will, notwithstanding the contradiction they must needs be guilty of, believe that they are Christ's Disciples, and Favou-rites of Heaven, and that Christ hath pur-chased Eternal Life for them, and that at last they shall enjoy it ; but alas ! they know not what Eternal Life, nor what believing means ; as well may a Man in *Bedlam* fancy himself to be a King, as such Persons, that they are the beloved of God, while they live in that which is most con-trary to his Nature, and like Enemies to the Cross of Christ, like Persons that have nothing but Body, nothing but Flesh, nothing but Sense about them. If Men may be saved contrary to Christ's Word, contrary to his Declaration, contrary to all the most solemn Protestations he hath made in the Gospel, then such Men may be saved, not else ; who can reflect upon these doings without Indignation, or grief, or sorrow, or wishing for Rivers of tears ? That Men should pretend to own the Gospel, and yet live directly contrary.

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to the Laws of it, argues either Malice, or Distraction, or stupid Ignorance; yet with such Men for the most part we have to deal; which makes St. Paul's Exhortation highly reasonable, *Finally, Brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free Course, and be glorified, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked Men; for all Men have not Faith,* 2 Thes. 3. 1, 2.

3. This embittering our carnal and sensual delights, is that which Men for certain shall wish they had done, when they come to stand before the great Tribunal. In that Day mens Eyes will be opened, and things will appear to them in other Colours than now they do. Their Understandings will not be clogg'd with this World, or Divertisements. They will have other Apprehensions of the Nature of Vertue and Holiness, and the Truth of what Christ hath delivered in the Gospel: The Reasonableness of his Precepts, the Equity of his Commands, the Excellency of his Doctrine, the Divinity of his Miracles, the infallible Certainty of his Promises and Threatnings will all shine bright in their Eyes; of all these they will be thoroughly convinced, and no doubt, no scruple, no ambiguity will remain as to any of these Points; the  
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vileness of their Pleasures, the brutishness of their Satisfactions, the rashness of their Delights, the baseness of their Enjoyments, the brightness of those Vertues they have despised, the glory of that Grace which they might have had, and would not, and the trivialness of the things they prefer'd before these, will then appear so plain, so legible, that there will be no room left for Ignorance.

It's true, these things might be known here, and would Men take the right way, they might come to be convinced and perswaded of them on this side Eternity; for some we find are fully satisfied as to these Particulars, and walk suitably to them, and therefore it cannot be impossible for others to attain to it; but their insensibleness is rather an Argument of stupid negligence, and wilful laziness; and so it must be, where People are not, or pretend not to be satisfied in things of this Nature. It is therefore necessary there should a time come, when they shall be able to make no excuse, nor to evade the force of these Truths, and when they shall behold how wise a choice the self-denying Soul hath made, and what her mortifications, and severities do end in, what applauses they receive in Heaven, what kind looks from the Everlasting Father,

Father, what Honour, what Dignity, what preferment is designed and appointed for her, how such a Soul Triumphs at this time over Hell, and Devils, dares all the Furies of the Burning-lake, scorns those foes which led the sensual Sinner captive, makes her Nest among the Stars of Heaven, is placed in the Quire of Angels, meets with all the Caresses of a gracious God, is encircled with Laurels, and Crowns of Joy, and all her Misery, and Sorrows, and Fears are at an end. Reason tells us that the sensual Sinner, when he shall behold all this, will wish, he had follow'd her example, for that's the necessary and eternal consequence of all imprudent Actions, es-

*Prov. 5. 11, 12.* pecially those that are grossly so; for afterward

Men do as naturally wish, that they had acted the part of wise Men, as *Balaam*, that he might die the Death of the Righteous. Thus Men become wise after the Fact, and when they find what Fools they have been, would be content that they had foreseen the evil, and hid themselves: Who would not wish in that Day he had embittered his sensual delights, that finds he is undone by eating of those luscious Apples? And I need not tell you, that it is every Man's Interest not to do that which

which he will wish he had not done, when it is too late. But of this I have said enough before. The next Point follows, and is a Case of Conscience, how far sensual delights must be embittered with this Prospect.

5. Whether a Christian, that would be saved, is upon this account obliged to forbear and abandon all sensual and worldly delights and recreations whatsoever?

So not a few have thought in the Primitive times which made them retire from the World, and deny themselves in all the Comforts of this Life, and put themselves to very great hardships and self-denials, being of Opinion, that they who laughed here, would mourn hereafter, and such as enjoyed the good things of this Life, would be miserably Poor hereafter. They looked upon the Two Worlds as opposites, and consequently believed, that the Means to arrive to the happiness of the future, were directly contrary to all present satisfactions; they concluded, that they who would be happy hereafter, must be unhappy here; and that they who would be happy here, could not be so hereafter; from hence rose their selling all they had, and giving it to the Poor, and the strange severities they used upon



upon their Bodies, whereof I have discoursed elsewhere ; and indeed the Gospel gives very little Encouragement to any thing that favours of worldly pleasure, nor do the Apostles allow much liberty in this particular ; whether it were that they thought that all sensual delights were improper for a state of Persecution, in which the Church then lived, or whether it was, that they were afraid such delights would damp their spiritual Fervour ; this is certain, that there is little to be gathered from their Writings in favour of Sports and Recreations.

Yet as strict as the Gospel is, it grants that we have Bodies as well as Souls, and that if the Bow be not unbent sometimes, the String will crack and become useless ; and though its possible for our Minds to soar so far above the World, as to know and care for no other delights but what favour of God and the glories of another Life ; yet those spiritual delights will not be of any long continuance, without the Body be allowed futable Refreshment, and hath its intervals of ease and relaxation. Were not some Divertisements lawful, Christ would scarce have vouchsafed his Presence at the Wedding-Feast in *Cana*, much less provided them Wine to Encourage

rage Temperate chearfulness ; and hither may be referred St. *John* the Evangelist's playing sometimes with a Bird, and going into a common Bath, whereof Ecclesiastical Histories give us an Account ; yet since there is nothing more common with Men, than to confound their sinful delights with lawful Recreations, it will be necessary here, to explain the Point in these following Particulars :

1. This must be laid down as a grand Principle of our Religion, that a Spiritual delight in God, in a Crucified Saviour, and in the Blessed *1b l. 44.* Effects and Influences of the Holy Ghost, in the Graces and Fruits of the Spirit, in feeling the Operations of the Divine Power and Glory upon our Souls, in the precious Promises of the Gospel, in the Revelations, God hath vouchsafed to Mankind, in the good we see wrought in our selves and others, in the Providences of God, and in Contemplation of his various dealings with the several States, Orders and Degrees of Men, in Psalms, and Hymns, and Praises of the Divine Majesty, in the thoughts and expectations of a better Life, in the Treasures God hath laid up for them that fear him, in another World, and in the various Priviledges, Prerogatives and Advantages of  
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Holy Men, &c. It is certain, I say, that delighting and rejoycing in such spiritual Objects, is the chief, the principal and sovereign delight which a Christian is with greatest application of Mind to labour after, and in Comparison of this, is obliged to count all these outward Comforts Dross, and Dung, and Dogs-meat; this is the delight which must engross his Desires, Affections and Inclinations; this must rule in his Soul, this must be Mistress and Queen Regent in his Mind; to this all must stoop, and then things cannot but go well, if this be secured and established. Without worldly Pleasure, Thousands of Saints have arrived to everlasting Bliss, but without this none; sensual delights are no part of a Christians Comfort; but this spiritual delight is the one thing necessary; and till a prospect of a future Judgment causes this delight to rise in our Souls, whatever sudden impression it may make sometime, the Plant is not of our Heavenly Fathers planting. Such must be the Temper of our Souls; in the afore-said Objects our Souls must delight more than in all Riches; and this delight being once settled in us, such worldly delights as are subservient to this, and do neither diminish, nor darken, nor hinder, nor quench

quench it, may justly be said to be lawful.

2. This being premised, we do not deny but such worldly delights, as are neither sinful in themselves, nor apparent Occasions of Evil, are allowable. And of this nature are all those Masculine Exercises whereby the Body is preserved in health, and rendered more capable of serving the Soul in her Religious Severities; as Walking, or Riding abroad to take the Air, Planting, Gardening, Raising curious Plants and Flowers, Running, Wrestling, Fowling, Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, Leaping, Vaulting, Casting of the Bar, Tossing the Pike, Riding the great Horse, Running at the Ring, and such Divertisements which stir the Blood, make us active and vigorous, fit us for greater and more useful Enterprizes, and promote Chearfulness and Liveliness; such cannot be supposed to be forbid by the Gospel, provided that they be used, 1. *Seasonably*; not on those days and hours which are appointed, either for Devotion, or more weighty Business; and therefore these cannot be proper Exercises of the Lords Day, or Days of Fasting and Abstinence, or Days of Mourning. 2. *With Moderation*; so that much time be not spent upon them, and our love to them may



may keep within its due bounds and limits.

3. *For a good End* ; which must be to render our selves fitter for the discharge of our Duty to God and Man. 4. *With purposes of Self-denial* ; so that we can leave or quit them for a greater good ; when either a Work of Piety, or an act of Charity is to be performed, or scandal to be prevented ; where these Limitations are not observed, the Honey turns into Gall, and that which deserv'd only our Civility and transient Respect, becomes our Idol, and our Souls receive considerable hurt, which, had these Divertisements been used with circumspection, might have been beholding to them in some measure for their welfare and edification.

3. From this Rule we may rationally infer, that delight in Orchards, Gardens, Rivers, Ponds, either Natural or Artificial, and in the Comforts of Wife, Children, Friends, in our Trades, and Relations, Houses, Buildings and Possessions, the bountiful Hand of Heaven hath bestowed upon us, is consistent with a serious prospect of a future Judgment ; not but that excesses may be committed in this delight, as the best and most harmless things may be abused ; yet where we delight in them, as they are the Gifts of God, more than as they are Satisfaction to  
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the Flesh, and build not upon them, rest not in them, but still look upon them as things volatile and transitory, and are ready to part with them, whenever Providence shall think fit to remove them, without grumbling or murmuring, and do let the World see, that in these delights we forget not the Rules of Gravity, Modesty, Decency and Charity, they may lawfully be called inoffensive, and as a Snake whose Teeth are pulled out, handled without danger : And though *Solomon* calls these delights Vanity, yet that which made them so, was the immoderateness of his love toward them, and his setting his heart, and doating upon them, and placing felicity in them, making them his mark, which should have been only a passage to nobler Enjoyments, and fixing there, where he should have lodged only as in an Inn, and so marched on to the City, which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. Delight in things of this nature, may soon run beyond its bounds, if either too much cost be spent upon them, whereby the Poor are robbed of their due, or Men forget to employ their Thoughts upon sublimer Objects.

*Eccles. 2. 4,  
8, 10, 11.*

4. The same may be said of delight in *Musick*, whether Vocal or Instrumental ;

a delight harmless enough, if used as Salt, not as Meat ; as Sauce, not as Food ; as a Bit on the By, not as a standing Diet ; and though the Men the Prophet speaks of, *Isa. 5. 12.* are severely checked for the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe in their Feasts, yet it was because they made their Musick an *Appendix* to their Drunkenness, and as it is said in the same Verse, *regarded not the Work of the Lord, neither considered the Operation of his Hands.* David's playing upon the Harp was no Sin, while it was not to encourage wantonness, but with an intent either to praise God, or to divert *Saul's* Melancholy ; nor can I discommend the *Pythagoreans*, who, before they went to Sleep, composed their Minds with Musick. We read in *Gellius*, *Ælian*, and others, how Men have been cured not only of irregular Passions, but of very strange Distempers of the Body by Musick ; and what is signally conducing to the good and benefit of Mankind, we must suppose is allowed by that God, who himself consults the health and welfare of his Creatures ; and this made *Jubal's* *Gen. 4. 21.* Profession lawful, who was the Inventer of Musical Instruments, and therefore called the Father of all such as handle the Harp and Organ. The end  
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for which such delights are used, makes them either tolerable, or impertinent; and as he that designs them to refresh either his own, or other Mens weary Spirits, and to glorifie God by them, deserves Commendation, so he that makes them instrumental to Feed Mens Lusts, or to promote Lasciviousness and Lightness in Conversation, renders himself unworthy of the Name of a Christian; and therefore those Fiddlers and Musicians, who shew themselves at merry Meetings, or promiscuous Dancings, which serve only to pamper the Flesh, and to encourage Extravagance and Luxury, will be able to give but a very sad Account of their Profession; and if ever they come to take a serious view of their past Lives, will have reason to wish that they had spent that time in mourning for their Sins: Christianity, which allows us moderate Recreation, bids us abhor all delights which serve to render the Mind vain and foolish, and alienate the Soul from her true centre, or tempt us to mispend the precious hours, the Almighty hath lent us to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling.

5. Delight in Books, and natural Sciences, such as Astronomy, Physick, Philosophy, Mathematicks, Histories of all sorts,



forts, and in searching into the Nature of Plants, Stones, Minerals, Fruits, Juices, Herbs, Gums, Birds, Fishes, Beasts, &c. as it is a thing useful, so it cannot be contrary to the Rules of Christianity; and though Astrology, as it is abused into telling of Fortunes, and good or ill Success in Businesses, discovering of Thefts and stoln Goods, and knowing future Events, is no proper Object of this Delight, partly, because the Rules are uncertain and imaginary; partly, because it tempts People to unlawful Curiosities; partly, because the Scripture forbids these Fears and Hopes, which are grounded upon the Aspect of the Signs of Heaven, and looks upon them as Mistrusts of the Divine Providence; yet that's no Argument but that a Man may lawfully with some delight enquire into the Nature, and Influences of the Stars, to see, whether what the World hath talked of them, is grounded upon any scientifick Principles. I need not say here, that delight in *Magick*, or the *Black-Art*, as they call it, is as great Abomination in the sight of God, as the Sin it self; nor can I give any favourable Judgment of delight in *Palmestry*, because that Art seems to interfere with that self-resignation and dependance upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, which

is required of us ; and even delight in lawful Arts, Books and Sciences, must have its Rules, whereby it must steer its course ; for the Affections may stick too close to delights of this Nature, and the delight juttle out our warmer desires after that knowledge, wherein consists Eternal Life. An inordinate delight in Knowledge, was the cause of our first Apostasie ; and it is too often seen that our Ambition to know, slackens our endeavours after a practical love of God ; and while we doat upon speculation, we forget to do that which would make us like our Father which is in Heaven.

6. Delight in *Drinking and Tipling*, must needs be as odious to God, as delight in Wantonness, or Uncleaness, or Lasciviousness, or Lechery, or impure Kisses, Touches, Glances, Passions, Desires, Thoughts, Gestures, Postures and Imaginations, or Feeding our Eyes with obscene Sights, and Spectacles, or filthy, smutty, and lewd Communications, Discourses, Jestts and Expressions, &c. For this is to delight in things God hath forbidden, and to take pleasure in that, to which he hath threatned the burning Lake, and the Worm that dies not ; and though Custom hath made delight in drinking fashionable, and he that doth so, is not at all reproa-  
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ched, or thought the worse Man for it, yet who knows not, that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor will the Almighty make the Customs of this World his Rule in passing Sentence in the last Day. Not but that a Man may delight in a Cup of Drink, as it is the gift of God, when he is dry, and Nature requires it, and Necessity calls for it; but there is a vast difference betwixt satisfying the meer Necessities of Nature, and gratifying the Desires of Voluptuousness and Idleness; to delight in the former, is to preserve, but to delight in the other, is to weaken and destroy Nature; and where Men are at a Loss how to spend their time, and therefore make drinking their delight and sport, they act like *Solomon's Mad-man*, who cast Fire-brands, Arrows and Death, and said, *Am I not in sport?* Prov. 26. 18, 19. Nor is it the example of Gentlemen, and Persons of Wealth and Quality, that will justify this dangerous delight at the great Tribunal; since believing the Word of God is a greater duty, than to regard our Neighbours practices; and did the whole World Espouse a Vice, this would not absolve a Man from his obligation to obey that known Law, *Exod. 23. 2. Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do evil.* The Pretence Men have in this case that they have

have no Calling or Imployment, or have nothing to do, and therefore must some way or other divert themselves, is as vain and sinful, as their delight; and the time will come when they will be convinced, that they were under no impossibility to employ themselves in useful exercises, there being innumerable opportunities of doing good, of exhorting, teaching, admonishing, helping, assisting and encouraging our Neighbours, and improving our own Minds, and far better ways of spending our Time, than in drinking, pledging of Healths, talking idly, censuring our Neighbours, pleasing our Appetite, keeping ill Company, and throwing that away upon our Lusts which might with greater satisfaction have been given to Christ's distressed Members.

7. Delight in *Cards* and *Dice*, is a Sport, which very few Divines and wise Men do approve of; and those that have allow'd of it, have given such Restrictions and Limitations, as makes it evident, that they wish it were rather totally left, than practised with so much danger as this delight is commonly attended with. The Council of *Eliberis* would not admit any person to the holy Communion, that plaid at Tables; and if the Offender did repent of

*Conc. Eliber. c.*

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his Sport, it was a whole Year after his Repentance, before they would admit him to the Holy Table ; and to this purpose speaks the Sixth Council

*Conc. Const.*

6. c. 50.

General of *Constantinople*. The

Truth is, this delight is a manifest occasion of evil ; and where there is one that comes off without sinning, there are Forty that involve themselves in various Transgressions. What wise Man would stand upon a Precipice, when he can Walk in a beaten Road ? And where Men love to go to the utmost limit of what is lawful, they commonly fall, and engage themselves to commit Errors they did not think of ; the Holy Ghost therefore hath not thought fit to reveal to us these utmost bounds, that we might keep within the Compass of known duties, and by a due distance from what is sinful, preserve our Innocence, and God's Favour. We blame Children for meddling with Knives and Swords they know not how to use ; and why should we be guilty of a Folly and Imprudence we Condemn in them ? He that abstains from Cards and Dice, most certainly doth not Sin, and who would not take the surest side of the Hedge ?

Those Casuists who do allow of this Recreation, make it lawful only with these

these Provifoes: 1. Provided, that Men play without eagernes, or being much concern'd. 2. That they give no occaſion to Men to quarrel. 3. That they give all the Money they win to the Poor, or ſome Pious Uſe, elſe it is a ſign they do not play for Recreation, but for Gain. 4. That they ſpend but very little time in it, not above an Hour or two. 5. That they avoid all light, vain, and fooliſh Words, Jeſts and Expreſſions. 6. That the End they propoſe to themſelves, be only to exhilarate their Spirits; that they may with greater chearfulneſs apply themſelves to more uſeful Labours. 7. That they play without uſing any fraud or deceit, 8. That they give no Offence to them who are weak in Faith. 9. That they do not comply with the ſinful Actions, Speeches and Behaviour of thoſe they play with.

And with theſe Reſtrictions, I queſtion not, but this Recreation may be lawful; and the ſame may be ſaid of Bowling, and ſome other diverſements of this Nature. What ſome Divines object here, That playing at Cards and Dice, is a thing of the Nature of Lots, and theſe being things ſacred, ought not to be made Jocular, hath not that ſubſtance in it, which at firſt it ſeems to have; for though theſe

Games and the Events of them, be things casual, yet every thing that's casual, is not of the Nature of a Lot, else a mans putting his hand in his Pocket, and taking out what Money comes next to his Hand, and dropping it among People that stand underneath, whereby one gets a Shilling, another Sixpence, a Third a Groat, must be called a Lot too: But however, Let's grant, that these Games are of the nature of Lots, how doth it follow from hence, that all lots are things sacred, because sometimes there is a sacred use made of them, must therefore the use of them be sacred at all times? There is a sacred use made of Dreams, of Bread and Wine, of Clay and Spittle, &c. But must these things therefore be sacred at all times, and in all places? As well might a Man infer, that all Worship is religious, because some is such; if it be said, that in Lots there is either a tacit or express imploring of a divine determination; I answer, that in some Lots there hath been such a thing practised; but that therefore the same must be practised in all Lots whatsoever, is absurd to imagine. The Apostles indeed, *Acts* 1. 24. when they cast Lots, add a Prayer to it; but the additional Prayer is not therefore necessary in all Lots, because

cause some Persons upon special occasions have made use of it. A Lot, or casting of Lots, is properly an action of meer Contingency, used to determine a Question by the event, which action, if it be used in things sacred, and of great consequence, may justly be seconded with formal Prayer and imploration of the Divine Direction ; but if used in things civil, ordinary and trivial, there is no need of any such sacred Rite or Ceremony : That God hath a hand in all Lots, is no argument, that no Lot may therefore be jocular ; for God hath a hand in our Laughter, and in other contingent things which are jocular, yet doth it not follow from thence, that they are therefore absolutely unlawful, but only as circumstances, and the abuse of them may make them so. However, my intent is not to turn Advocate for Gamesters, who abuse these Recreations, as much as the Drunkard doth his Wine and strong Liquor. I have therefore limited the Sport, which limitations shew how dangerous the Recreation is, and how he that plays at these Games walks in a manner upon Thorns, and had therefore need walk very cautiously, that some mischief doth not befall him.

If the aforesaid Restrictions be observed, it is a sign we make some conscience



of our ways, and with *David*, set the Lord in all places before our Eyes. I am sensible, Men will plead impossibility of keeping to these bounds, and pretend that this way they shall have no sport; but if it be so, and they cannot play without greater liberty or licentiousness, it is not only far better, but necessary totally to abstain from it. He that knows such a Diet will not agree with him, by a natural instinct forbears, and refuses to meddle with it; and if we know that by such recreations our Souls cannot live according to the strict Rules of Conscience, what can be more reasonable than to shun and avoid them? Wisdom is as necessary in spiritual things as in temporal, and he that doth not practise it in the concerns of his Soul, as well as in those of his Body, cannot be supposed to be a Man of any ardent Devotion.

8. Delight in *Feasting*, or in going to *Feasts*, though this seems to be harmless, and some will wonder, why this should be brought upon the Stage, and the lawfulness of it questioned; yet there are Rocks even in this Delight, which if the Soul doth not shun, it may be in danger of Ship-wrack; and though its true, that Eating, and Drinking, and Sleeping, and using Physick, where the Body is in danger,

ger, are necessary Delights, and such, without which Nature cannot be kept in its due order and health, and aptitude for working; yet Intemperance may be committed in all these, and consequently, these Delights deserve to be taken notice of, and fenced with futable Cautions, that we do not exceed our Measure.

And as nothing is more certain, than that the Voluptuousness of *Cleopatra*, *Heligabulus*, *Apicius*, and other Gluttons, is a most detestable Vice, so it may justly be demanded, whether Feasting, which borders upon that Voluptuousness, especially if a Man take delight and pleasure in it, may not deserve very great circumspection? *Plato* looked upon *Dionysius* as a Monster, because he did eat twice a Day; yet cannot this be a rule, whereby we may give judgment of this Delight, since the Constitutions, Climates, Countries, and the Complexions and Necessities of Men require various applications of Food and Nourishment.

That Feasts are things lawful in themselves, no Man of Sense or Reason can deny; for not only the Examples of holy Men in Scripture, but Gods Command, or Permission to the Jews, *Deut. 4. 6.* are a sufficient demonstration; and the Love-Feasts the Primitive Christians used,

St. *Jude* approves of, *v.* 12. Not to mention that they are Bonds of Union, and Preservatives of Friendship and Respect, and that the Universal Consent of Nations doth warrant them.

These Feasts, as they are usual either at Inaugurations, or at Nuptials, or upon some other solemn Occasions, or among Friends and Relations, so the delight a Christian takes either in making them, or in going to them, must be regulated by these following Observations.

As to the Party that makes them ; 1. That he do not confine his Invitation to the Rich and Wealthy, and who are able to Feast him again, but extend it withal to the Poor and Naked, to the Blind and to the Lame, according to Christ's Rule, *Luke* 14. 13, 14. 2. That he do not make any Feasts for ostentation sake, but with a pious intent of preserving and augmenting Friendship, Love and Charity ; for ambition to be talked of and commended, is against the general Prohibition of desiring vain Glory, *Gal.* 5. 26. 3. That he do not Feast on those Days on which a Nation Fasts, or Humbles it self, to deprecate God's Wrath and Anger ; for this is expressly forbidden, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. 4. That he do not study too great Curiousness, or Delicacy in his Dishes, nor bestow

flow too much Cost upon the Entertainment; for this looks like expecting of Applauses, and catching the Praises and Admirations of Men, which is below a Philosopher, and therefore much more a Christian. 5. That he leave every Guest to his Choice and Liberty, and press no Person to eat or drink more than satisfies Nature, in which particular, *Abashuerus* his Practice is to be commended, *Est. 1. 5.* 6. That he suggest unto his Guests Opportunities to discourse of Subjects grave and serious, either Divinity or History, or something useful to the Publick, or Philosophy, whereby his Friends may receive some Edification; and this seems to be the purport of *St. Paul's* Admonition, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* 7. That he encourage nothing of Ribald Talk, no promiscuous dancing, no Ballads, no vain drinking of Healths, no Apish Actions of Fools and Jesters, and give no occasion by word or deed to Contention or unseemly Behaviour in any Man; for this were to make himself accessory to other mens sins; a thing contrary to the Law of Christ, *1 Tim. 5. 22.*

As to the Party that goes to a Feast, his delight deviates from the Rule of the Gospel; if, 1. He goes to it with no higher intent than to please, and to fill his Belly.



Belly with the good Chear he hopes to find there. These are base ends, differ not from those of Brutes, and discover a Temper that hath not yet tasted of the Powers of the World to come. It is true, whoever goes to a Feast, goes with an intent to eat there ; but to a Christian Philosopher this is only a subordinate end ; in this he places no felicity, with this he doth not greatly please himself, but a desire to express his respect and affection to his Friend, hopes of hearing or doing some good at such times, and a design by his own Temperance and Sobriety, to teach or invite others to their duty ; these are the principal ends which make him go : and this is most agreeable, not only to the Rules of his Faith, but to Reason too.

2. delight grows irregular and sinful, if he sits very long at it ; for hereby much time is lost, and God expressly condemns it, *Es.* 5. 11. Time, as it is one of the richest Talents God vouchsafes us, so care must be taken, that much of it be not spent upon carnal Satisfactions, which are things too mean to throw away so great a Treasure upon ; and though that time at Feasts and Entertainments is well spent, which is spent in serious and profitable Discourses and Conferences, yet since these are altogether out of fashion, and

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People think they are not welcome except they may laugh at every Trifle, and speak whatever comes next; this makes spending but little time at such Meetings necessary; for the longer this unprofitable spending lasts, the greater grows our Account, and with the Account our Inexcusable-ness. 3. His delight degenerates, if at such times he be not a strict observer of the Rules of Temperance. Feasts, as they require Guests, so they require Self-denial in the Guests too; and though I cannot much commend the Custom of the *Pythagoreans*, who would come to a Feast, and to let Men see their Victory over their Appetite, depart from it without eating any thing; yet to eat and drink with great Moderation, is at such times the more necessary, by how much the Temptations are greater; and St. *Hierom's* Rule in this case, is so to eat and drink, as not to indispose our selves after it for Prayer and Meditation.

9. Delight in *Fashionable Cloaths and Habits*; though the great liberty Men and Women take in things of this Nature, hath infected Peoples minds with that stupidity, that few do think it worth questioning whether it be lawful or no; yet notwithstanding all this, he that shall impartially examine the various *Invectives* the Holy Ghost

*Es.* 3. 18, 19,

20. 21.

*1 Tim.* 2. 9. 10.*1. Pet.* 3, 4.

Ghost makes against this Delight, will think himself concern'd to be more inquisitive in this Point ; Cloaths as they were given, 1. To cover our Nakedness. 2. To keep out Cold and other Injuries of the Air. 3. To make a difference betwixt Men and Women. 4. To consult the health of our Bodies, which being subject to Sweats and Perspirations, are hereby refreshed. 5. To distinguish Men in Places, Offices, Dignities, from the meaner Sort, the Noble from the Ignoble, and consequently to keep up Order in a Common-wealth or Kingdom ; as they were designed by the Almighty for such uses, so we see that where Persons suffer their Affections to delight in the Fineries, and Fashions, and Modishness of them, their Minds are too often drawn away from more excellent Satisfactions, Vanity enters into them, and whatever Formality they may keep up in Matters of Religion, Spiritual things begin to be dull and insipid to them, at least their relish and admiration doth in a great Measure decay and Vanish.

I know not how it comes to pass, but Experience assures us, that Simplicity in Cloaths doth very much cherish Seriousness, as Vanity and Excess in such things doth

doth strangely weaken & debilitate its Force and Power ; and though Cloaths seem to be foreign to Religion, and small, inconsiderable Trifles, yet so it is, that the smaller and the more trivial some things appear, the more insensibly they inroach upon the Spiritual Part, the Soul, and render it earthly and sensual, and therefore deserve our greater cautiousness and circumspection. *St. Austin*

therefore is very peremptory :

*De Serm. in  
Monte lib. 2.*

*He that is fond, saith he, of outward Splendor, whether in Cloaths, or other things, soon betrays himself that he is in love with the Pomp and Glory of the World, nor can such a Person deceive any serious Man with a shew of Holiness.*

As it was part of our Saviour's Province to reduce things to the primitive Institution, so, if we reflect, how God, when he cloath'd our first Parents, did not study Splendor, but Necessity ; not Gayety, but Conveniency ; and made them Coats of Skins, and by so doing, warned us against Pride and Extravagance ; we shall find but little reason to be fond of over curious and fashionable Habits, especially if we cast our Eyes upon the Original of Cloaths ; for Sin caused Shame, and Shame produced Cloathing.



I do not deny, but that it is lawful to make use, not only of a plain and homely Suit, but of richer Vestments and Habilitments ; for since God hath allowed us not only Bread and Water for our Sustainance, but variety of Food, if used with Moderation and Thanksgiving ; so I doubt not, but richer Habits, especially if our Places, Offices, and Stations, and Ranks oblige us to it, may be allowable ; but it is one thing to go rich and gaudy meerly because our condition requires it, another to delight and take pleasure, and great satisfaction in it ; for this insensibly emasculates the Mind, depresses it, and renders it vain and enamoured with the World.

Every Man that strives for Mastery, is Temperate in all things, saith *St. Paul*, *1 Cor. 9. 25.* It is evident, that we all profess striving for an incorruptible Crown, and if Temperance in all things be necessary in order to it, this Temperance must necessarily appear in our Cloaths, as well as Diet, else the Temperance is partial, and consequently no part of that Wisdom which is from above.

A Christian should be the humblest, graveest, and modestest Creature living ; and who can be so irrational as to think that delight in imitating every Fashion,  
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is agreeable to this Gravity, Modesty, and Humility? and though what Judas said, *John* 12. 5. was spoke with an ill end, yet it may justly enough be applied to the case in hand; *Why might not such things purely superfluous, be sold, and given to the Poor?* That by such things there is Injustice done to the Poor, who might be fed with these superfluities, wise Men have complained in most Ages; In the primitive Church, when Men priz'd Religion at a higher rate, it was a thing very common for Persons who were converted, for Women especially, when God was pleased to give them a vehement desire after the felicity of the next Life, to sell all their richer Garments, and feed Christ's Poor Disciples with the Money, and for the future, to give that away to charitable uses, which formerly they used to bestow upon their Luxury in Cloathing. They knew they had nobler things to mind, than adorning this Lump of Flesh, which was shortly to be Meat for Worms, and to putrifie in the Grave; and thought, while they were curious in dressing, and covering their Bodies, they should forget to trim their Souls; and while their better part and its Beauty engrossed their desires and affections, they were the less curious  
in

in the setting out and garnishing of the other.

Women, as they are naturally more prone to this Delight, so the *Apostles*, in giving Precepts about Cloathing, do in a peculiar manner address themselves to them, justly supposing that if it be unlawful for them, Men, who  
*1 Tim. 2. 9.* have not ordinarily that inclination  
*1 Pet. 3. 3.* nor those Temptations to it that they have, ought to think themselves obliged to live above it; and though I do not think, that in those places broi-dered Hair, and Gold, and Pearls, and costly Array, are absolutely forbidden, yet they are so far forbid, as they are impediments to Godliness, to Shame-facedness, Sobriety, Modesty, Good Works, and the Growth of the hidden Man in the Heart, and to that Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great Price; as is evident from the opposition the *Apostles* make between the one and the other; and that delight in such Cloaths, is a great Enemy to all these, I need produce no other Argument, but what is drawn from common Experience.

*Vid. Chrysost.  
Hom 10. in Col*

That which is usually pleaded for Peoples going rich, and splendid, that by doing so,

so, they set Poor Men to Work, who would be at a loss for a Livelihood, if they did not take off their Commodities, such as modish Laces, Ribbands, Silks, Velvets, Embroideries, &c. is a pretence rather than an Argument, and seems rather invented, as a *Salvo* for Peoples Vanity, than a Testimony of the sincerity of their intentions; for, not to Mention, that at this rate Men might argue, that Players, Fencers, Bullbaiters, Juglers, &c. would want Employment, if Men did not go to see their Sports; were there no Persons to take off such things at their hands, Men would betake themselves to other Trades and Callings, and Professions. However, in these cases, it's worth examining our Consciences, whether we wear these things out of Compassion to the Poor Workmen, or out of Pride, and delight in the Pomp and Splendor of the World; and if we deal faithfully with our Hearts, we shall soon find, that the pity we pretend to the Work-men, is only a Cloak to cover the secret Satisfaction we take in conforming to the World; and this is evident from hence, that let the Work-men work never so hard, if the thing they make, be not exactly in the Fashion, I see no person so charitable as to take it off of their hands.

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There is no doubt but a Woman, who is married, is in a great measure obliged to please her Husband, and the Apostle seems to allow so much, 1 Cor. 7. 34. and from hence this Conclusion is commonly drawn, that if it be the Husbands pleasure, that the Wife shall go fine and gaudy, it is her duty to Obey; nor do I perceive, that Divines do ordinarily find fault with this Conclusion; for fine Cloaths being things in themselves indifferent, lawful, or unlawful, according to the End and Design Men and Women have in them, and the use they make of them; if the Party's Conscience that wears them, bears her witness, that not

*Vid. Cypr. de  
Habit. Virg.  
Ed. Oxon. p.  
95.*

out of any delight or satisfaction, or secret pleasure in such Gauds and empty things, but meerly out of obedience to Her Husband, she both buys and puts them on, much may be said in her justification; for though this desire in her Husband may be irregular, and an Argument that he hath no very great sense of Religion, yet the thing being in it self indifferent, the Wife in this case may lawfully comply, as Mothers and Nurses please froward Children by whistling, or singing a Childish Tune

Tune to them. It was from hence, that Queen *Eſter* profeſſes to God in her Prayer, that it was not any *Eſt.* 14. 16. fondneſs to that rich habit ſhe wore, or any delight ſhe took in it, that made her put it on, but a deſire to comply with the King; and that, as to the Cloaths themſelves, ſhe looked upon them as menſtruous Rags. So that the Reſult of all is this:

Rich Cloaths may be worn, 1. Provided that we do not wear them out of emulation, with an intent to vye with our Neighbours, or to let them ſee, that we have as much Money, and can afford it as well as they. 2. Provided that all Pride and Oſtentation in things of this Nature be laid aſide, and that we do not think our ſelves the better Men for theſe Accoutrements, nor deſpiſe others, who either will not, or cannot imitate us. 3. Provided that we do not make them Allurements to Luſts, or Baits of Vanity, nor wear them to attract the Applauſe, and Courtſhip, and Commendations of Spectators, nor hope to be therefore admired by the Croud, or Men of little conſideration, nor ſeek to deceive others by this outſide, thereby to obtain our baſe and ſiniſter Deſigns. 4. Provided that the Place,

Place, Calling, Office and Dignity in the Kingdom or Common-wealth we live in, require it. 5. Provided that we spend but very little time in putting on such Habits. 6. Provided that in the putting of them on, or wearing of them, we reflect much on the Nobler Garb of the King's Daughter, which is all glorious within, and how far greater Satisfaction it is to be cloathed with the Garment of Righteousness and Humility. 7. Provided that we do it only to please those whom God hath made our Superiors and Governors, whether in the Civil or Oeconomick State. 8. Provided that in these Habits we behave our selves with that Modesty, Gravity, and Gentleness, as becomes Christians. 9. Provided that we do not go to the extreame of every Fashion, but keep within the compass of these Modes, and imitate the most religious, and the most Moderate persons. 10. Provided that we do deny our selves in the number of them, and bestow the superfluous upon those that want them more than we, or give something equivalent to such as are in straits and necessities; in a Word, that we do not forget to Cloath the naked, nor hide our selves from our own Flesh, as God speaks, *Isa.* 58. 7.

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With these Restrictions I doubt not, but rich Cloaths may lawfully be wore, though still I say, that the plainer and more modest our outward Habit is, the nearer we approach that Christian Simplicity, which God hath the greatest value for. But for any delight in splendid Habits, or being pleased, or tickling our Fancy and Imagination with them, that's a thing which no serious Christian can allow of, and the Primitive Believers were so peremptorily against it, that they scarce looked upon such Persons as Christians.

To this purpose, St. Cyprian doth very pathetically address himself to the Virgins of that Age. *Some of you, saith he, are rich, and abound in Wealth, and these pretend that they may lawfully make a shew of their Riches in their outward Dress, and use those Blessings God hath given them. But be it known to you, that she is properly Rich, that is Rich toward God, and she only wealthy, who is wealthy in Christ Jesus; these are the true Riches which are Spiritual, Divine, and Heavenly, which lead us unto God, and are like to continue with us in the presence of God for ever: But as to other things which are pleasing to the World, and remain in the World, those ought to be despised as*  
much

Cyprian de  
Habit. Vir-  
gin.



*much as the World it self, whose Pomp and Glory we then renounced, when in our Baptism we gave our selves up to God. St. John therefore adjures us, Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World ; for if any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him ; for all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World, and the World passeth away, and the Lust thereof, but he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever, 1. Joh. 2. 15, 16.*

*Therefore Divine and Eternal Objects must be pursued, and all things done according to the will of God, that we may tread in our great Masters steps. Thou saist thou art rich, but St. Paul answers the Objection, and confines thy Garments and Habit to certain bounds, and so doth St. Peter ; and if they oblige even Wives to the Observance of this Rigor, and Ecclesiastical Discipline, who have somewhat to plead for themselves, because they must please their Husbands, how much more is a Virgin tied to live up to these holy Rules, who hath no excuse for her gaudy Dress ? Thou saist, thou art Rich, and canst afford it ; but all that thou canst do, is not therefore lawful to do, nor must the luxurious desires of the Flesh, which rise only from Ambition, go beyond the Limits of Virginity, since it is written, All things*

things are lawful, but all are not expedient. Thou sayst, thou art rich, and therefore thinkest thou maist use what God hath bestowed upon thee ; use it in the Name of God ; but then use it to such things as God hath commanded. Let the poor find that thou art rich ; let the needy feel that thou dost abound ; gain the favor of thy God by thy Patrimony, feed the hungry Jesus, and lay up thy treasure there where Thieves cannot break in and steal ; get thee Possessions, but let them be Celestial, such as the Moth cannot corrupt, nor Rust eat away, nor the Hail destroy, nor the Sun dry up, nor the Rain melt away : Thou sinnest against God, if thou thinkest thy Riches are given thee not to make a wholesome use of them : God hath given Man a Voice, must he therefore sing amorous, and undecent, and obscene Tunes with it ? God hath made Iron, must thou therefore Murther Men with it ? And because he hath vouchsafed unto us Frankincense, and Wine, and Fire, must we therefore sacrifice to Idols ? Or, because thy Herds and Flocks are great, must thou therefore commit Idolatry with them ? Riches are great Temptations, except they be employed to pious uses. In Scripture the Whore of Babylon is brought in array'd in Purple and Scarlet Colours, and Rev. 17. 4. decked with Gold, and Precious Stone, and Pearl, and her Judgment is said to be great and terrible ; and the Prophet Esaias threatens a fatal humiliation to the Daughters of

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Sion,

Sion, because of their Bravery ; when they were exalted thus, they fell, being trimmed thus, they deserved to have their Perfumes turned into a stink ; being deck'd with Silk and Purple, they could not put on Christ ; being adorned with Bracelets and Jewels, they lost the true Ornaments of their Hearts and Consciences ; Who would not shun that whereby others have perished ? Who would desire that which hath been a Sword and Arrow to others ? If a Man should drop down dead upon drinking of a Cup, we should conclude it was Poyson that killed him ; and what stupid Ignorance of the Truth must it be, what madness to be fond of that which hath always done, and still doth hurt, and to imagine thou shalt not be undone by that, whereby thou knowest others have been ruined ?

Thus far St. Cyprian, who lived about the year of our Lord 248. an eminent Bishop, and who afterwards died a Martyr in Christ's Cause, and in all probability spoke not only his own sense, but the judgment of the Universal Church in this Point, I will conclude this Subject with a Passage out of Tertullian, St. Cyprian's Master, who thus reasons the Case with the Women of his Age :

*Tertul. de  
cult. Fæm. 1.  
2. c. 13.*

‘ What means that saying, Let your  
‘ light shine before Men ? Why doth our  
‘ Lord call us the light of the World ?  
‘ Why

‘ Why doth he compare us to a City  
‘ seated upon a Hill, if we shine not in  
‘ darkness, or do not stand up among the  
‘ drowned part of the World? If thou  
‘ hide thy candle under a Bushel, thou  
‘ must needs, being left in the dark, be  
‘ subject to numberless assaults. These  
‘ are the things which make us lights of  
‘ the World, even our good Works. True  
‘ goodness is not enamoured with dark-  
‘ ness, but rejoyces to be seen, and is glad  
‘ to be pointed at. A modest and shame-  
‘ faced Christian doth not think it enough,  
‘ that he is so, but he delights to appear  
‘ so too; for such must be the fullness of  
‘ his vertues, that it may burst out from  
‘ the mind within, to the habit without,  
‘ and press from the conscience to the out-  
‘ ward Man, that Men from without may  
‘ see what store, and treasure he hath in  
‘ the secret recesses of his Soul. Voluptu-  
‘ ousness, and Wantonness must be re-  
‘ nounced, for by these the Vertue of  
‘ Faith loses its masculine vigor. I doubt  
‘ the hand that hath been used to Brace-  
‘ lets, will never endure the sturdiness of  
‘ a Chain for Christ Jesus; nor can I ap-  
‘ prehend, how the Knee used to a soft  
‘ Garter will be able to endure the Stocks,  
‘ or Racks for the Gospel; and I very  
‘ much question, whether that Neck  
G 2 ‘ which



‘ which glistered with Pearls, and pre-  
‘ cious Stones, will ever yield unto the  
‘ Sword of Persecution; therefore my  
‘ beloved, let’s chuse hard and uneasie  
‘ things, and we shall not feel them, let’s  
‘ forsake the pleasant things of this World,  
‘ and we shall not desire them; these are  
‘ the Anchors of our hope; let’s lay aside  
‘ these outward gayeties, if we aim at the  
‘ Wedding Garment in Heaven; let not  
‘ Gold prove the object of our love, by  
‘ which the Sins of *Israel* are expressed;  
‘ let’s hate that which hath undone the  
‘ *Patriarchs*, and was adored by them  
‘ after they had forsaken the fountain of  
‘ living waters. Come forth beloved, and  
‘ set before you the rich attire of the Pro-  
‘ phets and Apostles of our Lord; take  
‘ your fairnes from their simplicity, your  
‘ blushes from their modesty, paint your  
‘ eyes with their shamefacedness, and  
‘ your lips with their self-denial in speak-  
‘ ing; instead of Pendants, insert in your  
‘ ears the word of God, and let your  
‘ necks bear the Yoke of Christ Jesus;  
‘ submit your Heads to your own Hus-  
‘ bands, and then you’ll be dressed like  
‘ Christians; employ your hands about  
‘ Wool, and as much as you can, keep at  
‘ home, and this will render you more  
‘ amiable than Gold; Clothe your selves  
‘ with

‘ with the Silk of Innocence, with the  
‘ Velvet of Holiness, and with the Pur-  
‘ ple of Chastity, and thus adorned, God  
‘ will fall in love with you.

10. Delight in *Painting and Patching,*  
*and artificial meliorations of the Face and Skin,*  
to please and delude spectators, or to  
draw others into admirati-  
on of our persons, as it is a  
thing which the very Hea-  
thens have condemn’d for  
reasons drawn from the  
light of Nature, so it is al-  
most needless to discourse of it, or to bat-  
ter it with Arms and Weapons out of the  
Magazine of the Gospel. This Delight  
hath in most Ages been infamous, and the  
thing it self counted incongruous with the  
Law of our very Creation. The Fathers  
of the Second, Third and Fourth Cen-  
turies, derive the Original of it from the  
Devil, and will allow nothing of this na-  
ture in any person that looks like a Chri-  
stian. It is a sign that the Spirit of Christ  
doth not dwell in a person that dares de-  
light in such Vanities ; for that Spirit in-  
clines the Soul to other things, makes her  
regardless of Beauty and external Come-  
liness, obliges her solicitous about inward  
Accomplishments, and how she may please  
him that died, and hath purchased an

*Vid. Celada com-  
mentar. in Judith,  
c. 10.*

*Plutarch. in A-  
pophtegm, Ælian  
var. Hist. l. 8.*

eternal Salvation for her ; and it's enough, that he *that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his.* A Soul that hath *Rom. 8. 9.* the Spirit of Christ, hath other things t<sup>o</sup> do, than spend her time and care in mending the Face ; for *they that are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh; but they that are after the Spirit,* *Rom 8. 5.* *the things of the Spirit.* And what are the things of the Spirit, but setting our affections upon the things which are above, meditating of the purchased possession, longing after the light of God's Countenance, despising the World, self-denial, taking up the Cross of Christ, a transcendent love of God, a burning zeal to his Glory, laying up in store a good Foundation against the time to come, growing strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might, resisting Temptations, growing in Grace, labouring after a greater hatred of Sin, a greater fore-taste of Heaven, a greater conformity to the Will of God, a greater sense of the love of God, &c. And he that in good earnest minds these things, will have no great desire to busie himself about such pitiful, trivial and impertinent things ; these will be trash and dirt to him, and his Soul will soar above them, and scorn them, as the Devils Lime-twigs, whereby  
he

he lies in wait to deceive. And though I will not deny, but that a Man in case of danger, and when his Life is in jeopardy, or when he would pass through a party of his Enemies, may lawfully disguise himself, and by Art change and alter his Countenance, that he may not be known; and though a Man who hath lately had the Small Pox, or hath been Sun-burnt, or whose Face hath been parch'd with Wind, may lawfully take care by ordinary helps to reduce his face to his former, or native colour and complexion; and tho' we do not judge it against the Law of God, to hide some great Blemish or Defect in the Face, whereby Spectators may be offended, and particularly Women that are with Child, frightened; and though it is not inconsistent with the Rule of the Gospel, to wash the Face when dirty, yet all those Paints and additional Washes, and artificial black Spots, whereby Men and Women endeavour either to set off their Complexion the better, to give themselves a more pleasing Colour, or to mend their Meen, or to make themselves look more beautiful, or to attract the Eyes, and Admiration, and sometimes the unlawful *Amours* of those they converse withal, are things which a Christian must be a stranger to.



When I say Men, it is not without reason; for we read of such a Beast as *Paul*, the Second Pope of *Rome*, who whenever he went abroad, painted himself, that the Beauty of his Face might in some measure be answerable to the Comeliness of his Stature, which was procere and tall; and it is to be feared, that this Effeminacy dwells in too many Persons of the Masculine Sex at this Day: However, as Women are usually more faulty this way, than Men, so they give us but small hopes to believe, that they are Heirs of Heaven, while they are so industrious to please their Acquaintance and others here on Earth.

*St. Paul* would not please Men, no not in the Ceremonies of the Law, which were things formerly commanded by God, thinking it unworthy of a Christian, that had been freed from that Yoke by the Son of God; and how unworthy must it be then to please Men in things which God hath never commanded, nay by many hints and places discovered his dislike of? How justly may God look upon it as Presumption, to alter that Face which he thought fit to create in that shape it is of? And what is it but contending with our Maker, and expostulating with the Potter, why hast thou made me thus? and

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controuling his Art. and Wisdom, while not content with the Countenance he hath given, we seek to appear in a better?

As we are Christians, Sincerity must be our Character, not only in heart, but in the outward behaviour; and what Sincerity can there be in cheating Men with our Faces, and to make them believe that to be natural, which we know is counterfeit and artificial? We that are naturally prone to Pride, and Levity, and Lightness of Deportment, had not need encourage it by such Incentives, and put Oyl to that Fire, which, without great help is apt to burn into Hell. We shall meet with impediments enough from the World and the Devil, in our spiritual race; it is madness therefore to encrease those Obstacles by new inventions of our own, and we that know how apt every thing is to damp our holy Fervors, had not need make use of such vanities to extinguish them.

In the whole Scripture we read of no Women that ever painted themselves, but one that was cursed to a Proverb, even *Jezabel*, 2 Kings 9. 33.

And *Eusebius* makes mention of *Euseb. l. 5. c. 15.* a great instrument of the Devil,

whereby he sow'd Heresies in the Church,

that used this Trade, viz. *Maximilla*. Even among the Heathen, those that did so, were none of the best Fame and Credit in the World, such as *Poppæa*, Nero's Wife, and others; and in holy Writ, for the most part this delight is described as meretricious, and a quality of Strumpets and Harlots, as we see, *Ezek. 23. 40.*

And certainly neither these Examples nor Descriptions can be any great enticement to a Christian to imitate such infamous Patterns, who is to remember those who have spoken to him in the Name of the Lord, and to follow their Faith, considering the end of their conversation, *Heb. 13. 7.*

It was an excellent Character St. Gregory Nazianzene gave of the pious Gorgonia; No Gold, saith he, adorned her Temples, no flaxen hair, no borrowed locks, no artificial curls flew about her sacred head, no flowing mantles, no transparent vails, no looser garb that wanton'd in the Air, no costly stones vying with the brightness of the Stars, no Painters Arts help'd to Grace her noble frame, no operator assisted her to countermine the Work of God in her, and by deceitful colours to hide the curious fabrick of her Face, or to prostitute the divine shape that was in her, to wanton and impurer eyes, or to vitiate her natural Image, which

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which was reserved for God and another World, by an adulterous, fictitious Beauty. But even then, when she was acquainted with all the tricks and modes of ornaments, she would acknowledge and own none but what her Piety, and the Harmony of her Soul did give her. No other Red pleased her, but what her modest blushes caused; no White but what fasting and abstinence brought into her Cheeks; and as for Painting and modish Looks, and borrow'd Beauty, she left those impertinencies and vanities, to Actors and Ministers of the Stage, persons who have forgot to blush, and are ashamed of nothing so much as of sobriety and gravity.

This is an example for all Christian Women to write Copies by; and though the age we live in, hath long ago learned to despise this self-denial, as a starchy formality and precise niceness, yet that doth not make it of less value before Almighty God, who sees with other eyes, and is resolved to rectifie these wilful mistakes, if other means here on Earth will not do it, with Eternal Vengeance.

To this purpose St. Cyprian, Art not thou afraid, vain Woman, who makest use of Paint, and Washes, and such other curious fooleries about thy Face, art not thou afraid that thy Creator, when thou comest before him, will not know thee, but exclude thee rather from the promised Inbe-

De Habit.  
virg p. 100.



Inheritance? May not he reasonably use the Language of a Censor, and a Judge, and say, *This is not my Creature, here I see nothing of my Image; Thou hast polluted thy skin with false applications, the hair I gave thee is changed by Adulterous colours, thy face is nothing but a lie, the figure of it is corrupted, it is another thing than what it was; how canst thou see God, when thou hast not the looks God gave thee, but infected rather by the Devil? Him thou hast follow'd, thou hast imitated the old Serpent, thou hast borrowed thy Ornaments from thine Enemy, and with him thou must Burn.* O my Friends, are not these things to be considered by God's servants? Are not these things at which they may justly tremble day and night? Let those who are married and flatter themselves, that they do it in complisance to their Husbands, look to it, and see whether they do not in making such excuses, accuse themselves of being partners in the Sin; and as for Virgins and Maids who use these unlawful arts, I cannot reckon them in the number of true Virgins, but judge rather, that they ought to be removed from other young Women, like so many rotten sheep, that they do not infect others by their Corruption.

In vain do People plead here, that the Apostle, 1 Cor. 12. 23. allows us to bestow more abundant honor on those members of the Body, which we think to be

be less honourable, and therefore a homely Face may be trick'd up with suitable paints, and spots, and washes ; for not to mention that the Apostle by those members doth not mean the face and cheeks, but such as modesty bids us conceal ; The honour there spoken of, cannot be understood of paints and washes, for they are no Ornaments, but dissimulations and deceptions, and the honour that is allow'd to such uncomely parts, is hiding of them from the sight of Men, which I suppose such vain persons will never practise on their Faces.

And what if the ingredients of such Fucus's be Gods Creatures, so is poison too, and yet we see few persons so mad, as to make use of it so as to drink it, nor doth it signifie much, that persons may have a good end in all this, since we are not to do evil, that good may come out of it. It's granted, that natural Beauty may provoke spectators to lust, and lascivious desires, as well as artificial, yet from thence it follows not, that therefore the artificial ought to be allow'd of, as well as the natural, for there is not the same reason for the one that there is for the other ; the natural, God bestows and cannot be blamed, nor did the person that hath it spend time, and pains, and care to get it ; the  
arti-

artificial as people cannot endeavour after it, but their corrupt minds and affections must prompt them to it ; so it argues discontentedness with what God hath thought fit to give them, and an itching desire to deceive the unwary Spectator. And suppose natural Beauty allures and tempts voluptuous Men, must therefore more evil be added to the former ? must People therefore increase Temptations with artificial Beauty ? Is not the World bad enough ? And must it be made worse ? Must Sin be therefore multiplied, and the sickly minds of carnal Men, more and more distemper'd ? Is it not enough that natural Beauty is so dangerous ? And shall we encrease the danger by tricks and artifices ?

St. Chrysostomes advice here is very seasonable ; ‘ Consider I beseech you, *Sarah* and *Rebeckah*, and such Matrons, ‘ who have all undervalued this vanity, ‘ and *Leah*, though she was not handsom, ‘ nor so well beloved as *Rachel*, yet used no ‘ art to make her so, but the lineaments, ‘ and features of her Face remained as nature had disposed them, nor was she at ‘ all concerned at her homeliness, though ‘ educated by Parents who were Pagans ‘ and Idolaters ; and shalt thou whose ‘ head

Homil. 31.  
in Matth.

' head is Christ, and who pretendest to be  
' a Believer, approve of these inventions  
' of the Devil? Dost not thou remember  
' the Water that was sprinkled upon thy  
' Face in Baptism, nor the Sacrament  
' whereby thy Lips and Tongue were blef-  
' sed? Didst thou seriously think of this,  
' whatever fond desires thou mightest na-  
' turally have after such dangerous Orna-  
' ments, thou wouldst not dare to fulfil  
' them; Remember, thou didst vow to be  
' conformable to Christ Jesus, and thou  
' wilt hate this deformity, for he delights  
' not in these deceitful colours, but re-  
' quires a sublimer Beauty, even that of  
' thy Soul and Spirit; why shouldst thou  
' attempt a thing so vain, so needless and  
' superfluous? There is no defect in any of  
' Gods works, nor is there any thing that  
' stands in need of thy making it better  
' than it is; none dare add any new strokes  
' to the Picture of a King, and if he dares,  
' he smarts for it; when thou darest add  
' nothing to the workmanship of Man, art  
' not thou afraid to make Gods work better  
' than it is? Doth not the Fire of the bur-  
' ning lake come into thy mind, and dost  
' not thou think how thy Soul will one day  
' be totally forsaken, whose concerns  
' thou must needs neglect now while thou  
' appliest all thy care and study and thoughts  
' to



‘to thy body? Why do I say, thou ne-  
‘glectest thy Soul; thy very body doth  
‘not enjoy what thou wishest for, which  
‘is evident from hence, because, while  
‘thou seekest to be handsom, thou dost  
‘really appear homely; thou seekest by  
‘this to please thy Husband, whereas it  
‘cannot but be a grief to him, nor is it he  
‘only that blames thee, but others also do  
‘despise thee. Thou wouldest fain ap-  
‘pear young, but thy very paint hastens  
‘old Age; and whereas thou fanciest  
‘that this will make thee look glorious,  
‘thou dost but prepare for thy shame.  
‘But why do I mention things of this  
‘nature, while I forgo the greater argu-  
‘ments, as that thou offendest God, un-  
‘derminest modesty, raiseth jealousy,  
‘and makest prostitute Women thy pat-  
‘terns. All which being laid together,  
‘I beseech you despise these hellish Or-  
‘naments and unprofitable Arts, and re-  
‘nouncing this formosity, or rather de-  
‘formity, learn to be ambitious of that  
‘Beauty, which Angels do desire, which  
‘God is enamour’d with, and which can-  
‘not but be pleasing to your Husbands  
‘too, that having spent and led your life  
‘honourably here, you may attain at  
‘last to everlasting Glory.

11. Delight in *Dancing* is another common Recreation, and though Dancing in it self, as it is an agility or motion of the Body, whereby the Body is preserved in Health, and vigor, cannot be said to be unlawful, no more than singing and exercising the Tongue (not to mention that agility of Body is a gift of God, and if it be moved and exercised with observing time and measure, there is nothing in the word of God directly or indirectly against it) yet the manner and use, and the ends and designs of it, make a very great difference in the lawfulness and unlawfulness of it.

That *David* danced before the Ark of God, to testifie his joy, and exultation at so great a blessing, we read, 2 *Sam.* 6. 14. and *Michaels* despising him for it is noted as an error, for which by a Divine judgment she was doom'd to be childless; v. 23. which shews, that God approv'd of that expression of his joy, and the Prophets of *Israel* permitted the Women to Sing and Dance, and to answer one another, *Saul hath slain his Thousands, and David his Ten Thousands*, 1 *Sam.* 18. 6, 7. a custom which in all probability they had learned of *Miriam* the Prophetess, the Sister of *Aaron*, who after the victory over the *Egyptians* took a Timbrel in her hand,

hand, and all the Women went out after her, with Timbrels and with Dances, *Exod.* 15. 20. But then this Dancing was still upon a Spiritual account, with an intent to praise God, and to glorifie him not only in their Souls, but bodies too; and besides, the Women Danced by themselves, and the Men by themselves without mixing one with another, and only upon extraordinary occasions, when Gods power and goodness was to be Celebrated, and the younger sort were to be encouraged to chearful *Hallelujahs*, which is an argument, that Dancing out of wantonness, or promiscuous Dancing, Men and Women Dancing together to please Spectators, and to divert themselves, hath no warrant from the sacred Oracles.

This is the reason why mixt and lascivious Dancing hath been condemned, not only by the Primitive Fathers, but by almost all the Reformed Churches; nay the more serious sort of Papists look upon it as a thing intolerable among Christians. He that will not wilfully blind his eyes, must necessarily see, that this mixt Dancing had its original from the Heathens, who Worshiped their Gods by such extravagant motions, and there are not a few precepts in the Gospel, which forbid us to *Work the will of the Gentiles, and to live in*  
the

the Flesh, to the lusts of Men, as St. Peter phrases it, 1 Pet. 4. 2, 3. And indeed he that will impartially consider the extent of that chambering and wantonness, St. Paul speaks against, Rom. 13. 13. must confess, that this mixt Dancing, as it is usually practised, is comprehended under it. To any Man that reads the Scripture with attention and soberness, it will appear very evident, that nothing is pressed more by the Apostles, than gravity, modesty and great decency in our postures, actions, speeches, cloathing and behaviour; and how this mixt and jovial Dancing, is agreeable to all this, no sober Man can easily imagine.

That this mixt Dancing, though not necessarily and naturally, yet for the most part through the vitiousness and corruption, that is in the generality of mankind, is an apparent occasion of lasciviousness and levity, and impurer lusts, and an incentive to effeminateness, pride and vanity, is a thing past controversie, and then sure Christianity can give no encouragement to it. The usual concomitans of this sport are drinking, foolish and frothy talk, and other immodest postures and actions, so that to plead for it, is to plead for an accumulation of Sins and Enormities. And what doth this sport betray,



tray, but a weak, soft, easie, vain and empty Mind? What snares are hereby laid for spectators to entertain evil and dangerous thoughts, which too often hurry them on to impurer enterprizes, and when so many Councils, Synods, and wise and learned Men have apprehended the danger of it, writ against it, preached against it, made it their business to enquire into the nature of it, and upon examination of its tendencies and consequences, have both publickly and privately represented it, as improper for Christians, and an enemy to that seriousness, which ought to be their essential Character; it must be either pride or stupidity, that makes Men stubborn or careless under such censures. And is it probable, that people who never studied the point, or at the best, survey'd, and look'd into it negligently, should be so well able to judge of it, as those who upon weighing what can be said for and against it, have at last concluded and infer'd the undecency, and unlawfulness of it?

The Romans when they were yet Heathens, counted Dancing a very dishonourable thing, and *Salust* tells us of *Sempronia*, that she was more than ordinarily vers'd in Singing and Dancing,

*Vid. P. Martyr. loc. com. class. 2. c. 11.*

Dancing, which, *saieth he*, was more than became a grave and honest Matron; To this purpose *Cicero* affirms of a good Man, that rather than Dance before spectators, he would lose a very considerable Legacy; it was laid to *Lucius Muræna's* charge, as a crime, that he had Danced when he was in *Asia*; and *Cicero* observes upon that passage, that no Man sure would Dance, that was any way sober, it being the Quality of a Madman, and therefore among the errors, and misdemeanours, he objects against *Anthony*, he brings in Dancing for one. These were the thoughts of the Heathen Sages, before the flood-gates of debauchery were open'd, and while *Rome* retain'd somewhat of her ancient sobriety; and what witnesses will such Men be against Christians, who are taught to go beyond Heathens in gravity and sobriety?

What if this mixt and promiscuous Dancing, be not expressly forbid in Scripture? no more is the belief of *Mahomet's* riding upon his *Alborach* or white Steed to Heaven, no more is the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, and the *Mass*, and the Popes Triple Crown, Purgatory, and the Immaculate Conception of the *Virgin Mary*; yet what serious Protestants will infer therefore, that these are lawful Doctrines and  
Posi-

Positions? It's enough, that there are such lessons set down there, which any rational Man may easily conclude to be inconsistent with such recreations. It's enough that the Apostle forbids all those things which the *Greeks* call *κῶμος*, which signifies Feasting mixt with Dancing, *Gal. 5. 21.* we translate the word revelling, but it includes the extravagant action of mixt Dancing, whereby lusts and vanities are kindled or encouraged in the minds of Men, and he asserts, that they that use such things, or delight in them, *shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Nor will it avail here to say, that if any lascivious and impure desires be raised by accident, the thing it self may be harmless enough; for in things of Morality, and where Conscience is concern'd, we must not always take our measure by the nature of the thing, but very often by the humour and temper of sinful Men, that make use of it, as the learned

P. Mart.  
*loc. cit.*

*Peter Martyr* very well observes; for let's grant that here and there a sober Man may be found, who can with the greatest chastity of Mind be both a spectator, and an actor of such promiscuous Dancings, but what becomes all this while of the multitude, and of the greatest part of Men and Women, which are

are present at such sports, who cannot, will not keep within bounds? So that in this case we are not to respect what may possibly be done, but what for the most part uses to be done; In things of a moral nature, we must not go to the very edge of that which is lawful, but keep within a considerable distance of it, for the nearer we come to the utmost bounds, the nearer we approach to that which is unlawful, which is the reason, why the Apostle bids us avoid the very appearance of evil, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22.

I do not deny, but Men may do worse, but what necessity is there for their doing that which is bad, to avoid that which is worse? Must I therefore slander and abuse a Man, because it is a less Sin than to Murther him?

I know such Doctrines are usually branded with the name of foolish preciseness, but sure I am, they are agreeable to that wisdom which is from above; and he that means to arrive to this wisdom, must of necessity become a fool, a fool in the eyes of the World, and that must be a Christians greatest glory; for *know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with God, whosoever therefore will be a friend of the World, is the Enemy of God, Jam. 4. 4.* upon which



*Summ. Part. 2.*  
*tit. 6. c. 6. ff. 3.*

which words *Antonius* thus paraphrases; 'A friend of the World is he that loves the pomp, the lasciviousness, the pride and vain glory of the World, and he that will please Men in things of this nature, things usually found in promiscuous Dancings, becomes an enemy of God.

*Ludovicus Vives* tells us of some poor *Indians*, that were brought from the farther parts of *Asia*, who seeing some of our *Europeans* Dancing together, wonder'd what madness and fury had possess'd them; indeed he that should stand upon a Hill afar off, without hearing any Musick, and see people skip about, and sometimes beat the Earth with their feet, sometimes lift themselves up into the Air, sometimes in such a posture, sometimes in another, could think no less, than that they were forsaken of their reason. I need not here alledge any examples of Men and Women, who have found by sad experience, what a sad Exit their Dancing and revelling hath had, how in the Ball, which *Lodowick* the design'd Arch-Bishop of *Magdeburg* gave his kindred and relations, the house fell upon the Dancers heads, and crush'd the *Burgesmaster* and his friends to Death; nor how

how that vertuous Virgin in *Famianus Strada* was ravished in a Ball. The misfortune that befel

*De Bell. Belg. l. 1.*

*John* the Baptist through the jocular Dancing of *Herodias*, ought to fright Jevout persons from having any esteem and veneration for it; upon which passage *St. Chrysostom* thus comments,

*Hom. 49. in Matth.*

'Where there is lascivious Dancing, there the Devil is always present; God hath not given us feet for Dancing, but to walk modestly, not to skip like Camels, but that we might be fit to stand one day in the Quire of Angels; If the body be deformed, or disfigured by such leaping, how much more the soul? Such Dances make the Devil Dance, and this way Men are cheated by the Ministers of darknes. It were endless to rehearse here, what Men of learning and wisdom have said against this sport; one passage out of *Cornelius*

*Agrippa* may serve for all; 'No-

'thing can be more ridiculous

'than promiscuous Dancing;

*De vanit. scient. c. 18*

'This lets loose the reins of wantonness, 'is a faithful friend to sin, the great incentive to uncleanness, an enemy to chastity, and a recreation unworthy of rational Men. Here many a Matron hath lost her honour. here many a Vir-

H

'gia

gin hath learned that which she had better been totally ignorant of ; From hence many have come away worse than they were, but none better.

12. Delight in *seeing Stage-Plays* must not be omitted here ; and how far this delight may be allow'd of, and how far detested, I cannot shew you better, than by giving you the contents of a Letter, I formerly writ to a young Gentleman upon this Subject.

S I R,

Though you did pitch upon none of the best Casuists, when you sent your case to me ; yet since you have thought fit to ask my Opinion, whether it be lawful to go and see a Play, a thing our Gallants are so exceeding fond of, I must crave leave to tell you, that in the Primitive ages of the Church, such a question from one who professed himself a follower of the Holy Jesus, would have been looked upon with no very pleasant aspect, they supposing that every Christian, who knew, or was sensible into whose name he was Baptized, understood, that things of this nature are as foreign to Christianity, as lasciviousness and wantonness, and as contrary to the design of our noble Religion, which

is



is to plant a Spiritual Life in us, as wallowing in voluptuousness or luxury.

But the Times are altered, and our *Virtuosi* have allowed of it, and what Men in former ages scarce thought fit to be named among Christians, this hath made not only convenient, but in some respect necessary, and essential to a person of Quality; so that this Question as the case stands, may with some justice be ask'd, and even a very sober person may now with some reason demand, whether there be any harm in beholding these dramattick representations? And here I would not be thought so rigid, or foolish rather, as if I believed no representation of History, or Mens actions in the World lawful, for that would be directly contrary to Christs own practice, who instituted a Sacrament to represent his Death and Passion by, and to keep up the remembrance of it to the Worlds end; and though this is not acting things to the Life, yet it at least imports so much, that something Historical may be represented in lively and significant Characters, the management of which must be left to the prudence and discretion of sober Men.

But then these representations must be restrain'd altogether to vertue and



goodness, and such accomplishments of the Soul, which the wisest, and holiest Men in all ages, have been desirous and ambitious of; and though vertue cannot be well either discoursed of, or represented without its opposite vice, yet such is the nature of vice, such the unhappy consequences of it, that if either the pleasure, or ease, or prosperity and success of it be shewn and acted, though but for a few minutes, whatever Fate it ends in, it's so agreeable to the corrupted tempers of Men, that it leaves a pleasing impressi<sup>o</sup>n behind it; nor is the after clap or doleful *Exit* of it, strong enough to prevent a liking or satisfaction, especially in the younger sort, who are generally more taken with its present content and titillations, than frighted with its dull and muddy conclusion; for while its present success, and sweetness is acting, the *Cupid* strikes the Heart, and lays such a Foundation there, as mocks all the death and ruine, it after some time doth end in; I doubt not, but the joys of Angels, and the triumphs of glorified Souls might be acted to the life, and great good might issue from the gaudy *Opera*, and if justice, patience, sobriety, humility, and contempt of the World, with all the garlands, and solid joys that attend

attend them, were represented with their  
 future recompence, in a serious way,  
 without jesting or raillery, not a few Men  
 and Women might be signally edified by  
 it, their affections raised above their or-  
 dinary level, and their courage kindled  
 to press towards the noble prize; but  
 then there must be nothing of the present  
 amiableness of vice mingled with the  
 Scenes, for though vice must almost  
 necessarily be named in these *living*  
*Landskips*, yet it should be only named,  
 and never named but with horror, and  
 the generosity and grandure of vertue  
 only acted to the Life, for indeed no-  
 thing is fit for action, or imitated but  
 vertue; vice should never appear but in  
 its ugly shape, for if you dress it in its  
 shining Robes, though it be but for a  
 quarter of an hour, such is the venom of  
 this *Basilisk*, it breaths a poisonous vapour,  
 both on the Actor and the Spectator,  
 and while the one comes to see sport, and  
 the other to get money, both go away  
 from the *Theatre* worse than they came;  
 and though both come away laughing,  
 yet both prepare for bitter Mourning  
 and Lamentation.

I have shewn you what *Drama's* may  
 be useful and commendable; but *Sir*, all  
 this differs very much from the modern

' Plays, the aforesaid question relates to,  
 ' these being things fitted for vanity and  
 ' luxury ; for in these, though the Punish-  
 ' ment of vice, and rewards of vertue are  
 ' represented to the life, yet it's done rather  
 ' with advantage to the former, than to  
 ' raise the credit of the latter, and the ef-  
 ' fect shews it, *viz.* the Corruption and  
 ' debauchery of Youth, and persons of all  
 ' sorts and sizes, which I shall more large-  
 ' ly speak of in the sequel.

' The Plays we speak of, are suited to  
 ' the loose humour of the age, which  
 ' seems to hate all things that are serious,  
 ' as much as Rats-bane, and delights in  
 ' nothing so much, as in jests and fooleries,  
 ' and seeing the most venerable things tur-  
 ' ned into *ridicule* : Here no Play relishes  
 ' but what is stuf with love tricks, and  
 ' that which makes People Laugh most, is  
 ' the best written *Comedy* ; wantonness is  
 ' set out in its glittering garb, and the  
 ' melting expressions that drop from its  
 ' lips, are so charming to a carnal Appe-  
 ' tite, that the young lad wishes himself  
 ' almost in the same passion and intrigue  
 ' of Love, he sees Acted on the Stage, it  
 ' looks so pleasant and ravishing.

' Here Religion is too often traduced,  
 ' and through the sides of Men that differ  
 ' from our Church, the very Foundation  
 ' of



of Christianity is shaken and undermined ;  
 not but that Hypocrisie in Religion ought  
 to be severely lash'd, but then it must be  
 done in a grave, becoming and serious  
 way ; such as Christ and his Apostles  
 used against the painted Sepulchres, the  
*Pharisees*. The Stage hath that unhappy  
 character, that it is looked upon by the  
 generality, as the grand place of diver-  
 tissement: Men come thither not to learn,  
 but to be merry ; and since acts of hypo-  
 crisie look so very like acts of true Re-  
 ligion, the danger is, that while you  
*raille* the counterfeit, you hurt the Ori-  
 ginal, and while you dress the Image in  
 a fools Coat, the substance suffers in the  
 ridiculous representation.

So that here Men and Women are in-  
 sensibly poison'd, and the good thing  
 they see made aukward in an enemy, in  
 time looks but odd and strange in a  
 friend, and by degrees the vertue, is  
 hated in good earnest, because one that  
 was in the habit of an hypocrite, did  
 practise it.

Here few sacred things are spared, if  
 they serve to make up the *Decorum* of  
 the Act, and Heathenism is reduced into  
 Christian territories in a pleasant way.  
 The Pagan Gods must make the *Drama*  
 great, and while these are in all the



' Actors Mouths, the licentious Spectator  
 ' in time applies that to the true, which  
 ' the fond *Poet* ascribed to fictitious Dei-  
 ' ties. Here the supream Creator is too  
 ' often reviled through the ill language  
 ' that's given to Heathen *Numens*, and  
 ' things that savour of real piety, rendred  
 ' flat, insipid and impertinent; here all  
 ' that may raise the Flesh into action and  
 ' desire, is advanced, and whatever serves  
 ' to lay reason asleep, and to exalt fancy  
 ' and imagination, and the glory of the  
 ' World, is made the proper object of  
 ' Admiration; Here all the wanton looks  
 ' and gestures, and postures that be in  
 ' the mode, are practised according to  
 ' art; and you may remember, you have  
 ' seen People when dismiss from a Play,  
 ' strive and labour to get that grace and  
 ' antick meen, they saw in the Mimick  
 ' on the Stage; Here Men Swear and  
 ' curse, and actually imprecate themselves,  
 ' and though they do it under the name of  
 ' the person they act, yet their own  
 ' Tongue speaks their Sin, and their body  
 ' is the agent that commits it; and  
 ' thus they damn themselves for a Man in  
 ' imagination.

' And are these things fit for a Christian  
 ' to behold! A Christian who is to be a  
 ' new Creature, a candidate of Eternity,  
 ' an

‘ an heir of Heaven, an Enemy to the  
 ‘ World, a spiritual Prince, a King over  
 ‘ his lusts, and Emperour over his carnal  
 ‘ desires? Is this a sight agreeable to the  
 ‘ strait way, and the narrow gate which  
 ‘ leads to Life? Can you, or any Man  
 ‘ reconcile such darkness with light, such  
 ‘ Idols with the Temple of God? Is there  
 ‘ any thing in the Gospel more plainly  
 ‘ forbid, than conforming to the World?  
 ‘ And what can that prohibition import,  
 ‘ if conformity to the World in beholding  
 ‘ these dangerous sights, be not in a great  
 ‘ measure meant by it? We may put for-  
 ‘ ced glosses upon the words, but doth  
 ‘ not this look like the natural sense of  
 ‘ them?

‘ Holiness, for without it no Man shall  
 ‘ ever see the Lord, is the very Character  
 ‘ of Men, who name the name of Christ,  
 ‘ if they bear not that name in vain; and  
 ‘ will any Man of sense be so bold, as to  
 ‘ say, *that Shews, which have so much sin in*  
 ‘ *them, are suitable to that Holiness?* We  
 ‘ know who said, *Turn away*  
 ‘ *mine eyes from beholding Va-* Ps. 119. 47  
 ‘ *nity;* and who sees not that  
 ‘ he who delights in such shews, neither  
 ‘ dares pray that Prayer, nor can have  
 ‘ any desire to *imitate David* in his holiness,  
 ‘ for he is pleased with vanity, fixes his  
 H 5 eyes

' eyes upon it, makes it the pleasing object  
 ' of his sight, and consequently instead of  
 ' turning his eyes away from it, turns  
 ' them to it, and would not for a World  
 ' lose that pleasure.

' If thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out,  
 ' and cast it from thee ; for it is profitable for  
 ' thee, that one of thy members should perish,  
 ' and not that thy whole Body should be cast  
 ' into Hell ; said he, who hath protested,  
 ' that not the least tittle or jota of his words  
 ' shall perish, *Matth. 5. 29*. If there be  
 ' any sense in this passage, the meaning  
 ' must necessarily be, that if the eye, or  
 ' beholding an object, prove an occasion  
 ' of evil, the eye must be so carefully,  
 ' and so totally withdrawn from that object,  
 ' as if it were actually pluck'd out, or  
 ' were of no use in the body ; what an  
 ' occasion of evil the beholding of such  
 ' scurrilous shews is, none can judge so  
 ' well as he who takes notice, how by  
 ' these sights, the horror which attended  
 ' some Sins, is taken off, and Men are  
 ' tempted to entertain a more favourable  
 ' Opinion of them ; how apt upon these  
 ' occasions they are to laugh at those Sins  
 ' which require rivers of Tears, and to  
 ' smile at the jest they hear, which de-  
 ' serves their most rigid censures ; how  
 ' natural it is to be affected with these re-  
 ' pre-

presentations? And if there be any thing of evil in them, how readily is it imbibed, or if not imbibed, yet excused, if not totally excused, yet qualified, and construed as a thing of no great hurt, and thus its dreadfulnes abates, and it's afterwards left out in the Catalogue of errors.

God was either so jealous of his own glory, or so tender of the spiritual welfare of the Israelites, that he would not suffer them to take the names of the Heathen *Exod. 23. 13.* Gods in their Mouths, nor suffer them familiarly to mention them, for fear their frequent naming of them should lessen their awful apprehensions of the supream Deity, or they be tempted through that familiarity, to think there was no great harm in worshipping of them; this was no ceremonial precept, nor judicial: The substance is moral, and consequently cannot be supposed to be abolish'd by the death of Christ; and since God would not permit it to the *Jews*, how should he be supposed to give leave to Christians, of whom he requires greater strictness, to be lavish in such expressions? How in our modern Plays in most addresses, wishes and imprecations, the Heathen Dei-



Deities are brought in, I need not tell you: The Actors indeed swear by God in the singular number, but in their entire *Harangues*, or witty sentences or expressions, which they intend shall move most, the Gods are call'd in, and that's the grace of their part. If it be said that this is done out of a reverential respect to the true God, who is too great to be mention'd in such trivial speeches; 'tis soon replied, that it's a very marvellous thing, they should stand in awe of the true God, and yet make nothing of Swearing by him, and taking his name in vain; and though they mince their Oaths sometimes, yet that doth not excuse the Crime, as long as it shews their willingness to act it; but the truth is, such Men seek to turn Religion again into Paganism, so the style they use in their respective speeches about things above, is fitted for that purpose.

I know that it's commonly alledged, that the stories which are Acted, relate to Transactions among the *Gentiles*, and that it would be incongruous to represent their actions, and not to mention their Deities, or to speak in their language; but not to mention, that there is no necessity of representing passages of this nature, there being as noble things  
among

' among Christians, that deserve remem-  
 ' brance, why cannot the vertues of Pa-  
 ' gans be represented without mentioning  
 ' their Gods, or the Sins and extrava-  
 ' gancies of their Gods, whereby cor-  
 ' rupted nature is so easily debauch'd into  
 ' a mean opinion of the great Sovereign  
 ' being, and tempted to believe the pow-  
 ' ers above either subject to the same in-  
 ' firmities, that we are, or at least not  
 ' much displeased with our irregularities  
 ' here below? He that makes bold with  
 ' false Gods, does very easily slide into  
 ' contempt of the true; and while Men  
 ' are brought in to dare the supposed  
 ' Deities above, they'll be more ready to  
 ' affront him, that is *the same yesterday, to-  
 ' day and for ever*. Nor will it follow, be-  
 ' cause Books that treat of Heathen Gods  
 ' may be read, that therefore those Dei-  
 ' ties may be Acted, and mentioned on  
 ' the Stage; for there is a great diffe-  
 ' rence between reading a thing, and  
 ' seeing it acted with all the vanity and  
 ' boldness that usually attends it. In rea-  
 ' ding, a Mans serious thoughts are not  
 ' dispersed or scattered, but keep within  
 ' the compass of Modesty, and weigh things  
 ' in the ballance of reason; whereas being  
 ' Acted to the Life, they naturally strike  
 ' vanity into the Mind, affect the sensual  
 ' part,

part, drive away seriousness, and leave an unhappy tincture behind them.

And if it be against the Divine Law, familiarly to mention or talk of these fictitious Deities, it cannot be very agreeable to the sense of it, for Christians to go and hear that idle talk; for as in other concerns the receiver is as bad as the Thief, so he that with delight hears that which another is forbid to speak, makes himself accessory to his Sin, and draws needless guilt upon his Soul.

Flatter not your self, Sir, with a fancy, that these Plays are no where forbid in the Bible, and that therefore it may be lawful to see them, for the word *καῖροι*, Revelling, I mentioned before, and to which the Apostle threatens exclusion from the Kingdom of Heaven, *Gal. 5. 21.* and from which the word Comedy in all probability is derived, though I know others fetch it from *κῶμα*, a village, because in ancient times, they did sing Songs about Country Towns, I say this word includes all such vain, lascivious, ludicrous and jocular representations, not only Dancing and luxurious Feasting, but wanton, light and

*Vid. Gerb. Joh.  
Voss. de Idol. 1.  
2. c. 8.*

‘ and amorous Interludes, and all that be-  
 ‘ longs to the pampering and satisfying of  
 ‘ the Flesh, such as amorous Songs, Com-  
 ‘ plementing of Mistresses, Love-tricks,  
 ‘ and immodest parts and speeches, which  
 ‘ make the vainer sort of the Company  
 ‘ merry, for the word is very compre-  
 ‘ hensive, and being so, one would think  
 ‘ should fright every serious person from  
 ‘ coming within the guilt of that, which  
 ‘ hath so severe a threatening annex’d  
 ‘ to it.

‘ And is it worth losing Heaven, and  
 ‘ eternal Happiness for the sight of such  
 ‘ jocular Shews? Are the pleasures ari-  
 ‘ sing from hence, of that consequence,  
 ‘ that they will counter-balance so great  
 ‘ a loss? Had you rather forfeit Gods  
 ‘ favour, than these ludicrous transacti-  
 ‘ ons? Are these momentary satisfactions  
 ‘ of that value, that you would run the  
 ‘ hazard of being for ever deprived of the  
 ‘ beatifick Vision for them? That usual  
 ‘ exception, that God will not be so cru-  
 ‘ el, as to condemn Men for such harmless  
 ‘ sports, is of no Weight at all; for God  
 ‘ hath no where declared, that he will  
 ‘ govern himself by Mens fancies, but his  
 ‘ eternal wisdom is the rule he’ll go by;  
 ‘ if Men will have their pleasures, he hath  
 ‘ thought fit to forbid, they must thank  
 ‘ them-



' themselves, if they go without his favour;  
 ' and since they were warned of this dan-  
 ' ger, they can have no excuse, but are as  
 ' the Apostle speaks *ἀντιμαρτυροῦντες* condemn'd  
 ' of themselves, *Tit. 3. 11.*

' Let's but consider the nature, scope  
 ' and drift of our Religion; it commands  
 ' us decency, modesty, sobriety, vigilan-  
 ' cy, or watchfulness over our thoughts  
 ' and words, and actions, simplicity in  
 ' the inward and outward Man, redeem-  
 ' ing the time, employing the hours God  
 ' hath lent us, in profitable discourses,  
 ' and things useful and tending to edifi-  
 ' cation. It bids us abstain from fleshly  
 ' lusts, which war against the Soul; it  
 ' condemns all rioting, chambering, wan-  
 ' tonness, and making provision for the  
 ' Flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof: It com-  
 ' mands us to walk after the Spirit, to be  
 ' heavenly minded, to have the same mind  
 ' and temper in us, which was also in  
 ' Christ Jesus, to grow in grace, to ad-  
 ' vance in goodness, to grow strong in  
 ' the Lord, and in the power of his might;  
 ' it bids us stand up for the glory of our  
 ' God, and to be concern'd when his  
 ' Name, or Religion, or things Sacred  
 ' are abused; it bids us avoid Scandal,  
 ' and take heed we do not by our example,  
 ' either draw people into errors, or con-  
 ' firm

' firm them in their Sins ; it bids us take  
 ' heed of discouraging our neighbours  
 ' from goodness, and of laying a stum-  
 ' bling-block in the way of weaker Chri-  
 ' stians ; it bids us exhort one another  
 ' daily and beware lest any of us be hard-  
 ' ned through the deceitfulness of Sin ;  
 ' these are some of its principal rules, and  
 ' I need not add, what our great Master  
 ' hath told us, *ye are my friends, if ye do*  
 ' *whatsoever I command you*, Joh. 15. 14.  
 ' how these rules can be observed by per-  
 ' sons that delight in these shews, I can-  
 ' not apprehend ; is it modesty to be a  
 ' hearer of that ribaldry and filthy com-  
 ' munication, which some Plays are stuf-  
 ' fed with ? Or to be a Spectator of so  
 ' many undecent and wanton gestures,  
 ' postures and actions, which in some Co-  
 ' medies make up the greatest part of the  
 ' shew ? Is this sobriety, to stand by and  
 ' hear Men Curse and Swear, and talk  
 ' of things which should not be so much  
 ' as named among Christians ? Is this de-  
 ' cency to afford your presence in a place,  
 ' where the most debauched persons as-  
 ' semble themselves for ill ends and pur-  
 ' poses ? Is this your fear of God to go  
 ' and hear the most solemn ordinances of  
 ' God *railed*, and undervalued, such as  
 ' marriage, and living up to the strict  
 ' rules

' rules of Reason and Conscience? Is this  
 ' your watchfulness over your thoughts  
 ' and words, and actions, to go and ex-  
 ' pose your selves to Temptations, to run  
 ' into the Devils arms, and give him an  
 ' opportunity to incline your heart to sin-  
 ' ful delights, and being pleased with  
 ' things which God abhors? Is this that  
 ' Godly simplicity, the Gospel presses, to  
 ' pay for your being affected with the  
 ' vain shews of this sinful World, and to  
 ' take liberty to hear and see, what Men  
 ' of little or no Religion shall think fit to  
 ' represent to you? Is this redeeming of  
 ' your time to throw away so many hours  
 ' upon fooling, and seeing mens ridi-  
 ' culous postures, gestures and beha-  
 ' viours?

' Is not this making War against your  
 ' Soul? Is not this fighting against your  
 ' happiness? Is this the way to grow in  
 ' grace, and to advance in goodness, and  
 ' to abound more and more in the love of  
 ' God, which your Christianity obliges  
 ' you to? Is not this to clog your Soul?  
 ' Is not this to throw impediments in her  
 ' way to felicity? Is not this the way to  
 ' make her inamour'd with the World,  
 ' from which a Christian is to run away,  
 ' as much as he can? By your Saviours  
 ' rule though you are in the World, yet  
 ' you



‘ you are not to be of the World ; these  
‘ shews alienate other mens affections  
‘ from the best of objects, and what se-  
‘ curity have you, that they will not a-  
‘ lienate yours ? Or have you a peculiar  
‘ exemption from that danger ? If you  
‘ have, shew us your warrant, let’s see  
‘ your patent ; if you take the same way  
‘ that profane persons take, to dull their  
‘ religious desires, how can it be other-  
‘ wise, but it will have the same effect in  
‘ you ? If you use the same means, why  
‘ should you not fear the same unhappy  
‘ influence ? Why should you shut your  
‘ Eyes against a thing as clear as the Sun ?  
‘ Do not you see, do not you perceive,  
‘ how Sin grows upon you by frequenting  
‘ these places ? Do not you find, how  
‘ under these shews, the brutish part in  
‘ you grows strong and vigorous, how  
‘ the Flesh distends its plumes, grows easie  
‘ and pleased, and in time engrosses all  
‘ the nobler faculties of your Soul ? As  
‘ you are a Christian, you are to bring  
‘ your Flesh into subjection and to keep  
‘ under your Body ; and do not these  
‘ shews signally help towards its Power  
‘ and Dominion over the nobler part, and  
‘ promote its Sovereignty, and Triumph  
‘ over the reasonable appetite ? What  
‘ pampers it more than such sights ? What  
‘ feeds



' feeds its preposterous longings more than  
' these? Do not these evidently make  
' this Slave usurp Authority over her  
' Mistress? And is this fit to be done by  
' Christians, who are to Crucifie the  
' Flesh with its lusts and affections?

' Who sees not, that these sights are  
' meer incentives to lust, and fuel to  
' feed the impurer fire in our breasts?  
' And is this to walk after the Spirit, as  
' we are commanded? If they that walk  
' after the Flesh cannot please God, how  
' can you hope to please him, while you  
' allow your self in this Work of the  
' Flesh? Is this to promote a lively sense  
' of God? Is the Stage likely to pro-  
' duce vigorous apprehensions of Gods  
' grace and favour? You know it damps  
' and obscures them, you know it is an  
' Enemy to them, you know it is the  
' Worm that hinders your Spiritual growth,  
' and yet will you fancy a necessity to  
' frequent it? Men may count it neces-  
' sary to be drunk, and to kill a Person  
' they do hate, but will this necessity  
' hold Water when the great Judge comes  
' to examine it? The Flesh may count  
' that necessary, which reason appre-  
' hends to be absurd, and impious, and  
' he that hearkens to the dictates of the  
' brute

brute within him, will call any thing  
‘ necessary, though never so contradi-  
‘ ctory to the Oracles of Heaven, and the  
‘ lessons of our great Master Jesus? Is  
‘ this to have the same mind in you,  
‘ which was also in Christ Jesus? I hope  
‘ you do not question the duty, and if  
‘ you believe it incumbent upon you, can  
‘ you imagin, that in frequenting the  
‘ Stage, you imitate his example? Did he  
‘ ever encourage such empty things? Is  
‘ there any thing in all the History of his  
‘ Life, that may be said to Countenance  
‘ such doings? Could he applaud these  
‘ follies, do you think, whose Life was  
‘ a perfect pattern of holiness, nay, are  
‘ not all his precepts, levell’d against  
‘ these scurrilities? Is it possible to live  
‘ up to his precepts, and feed our eyes  
‘ with these Shews? Is it possible to be  
‘ his Friend, and a Friend to these Vani-  
‘ ties? He whose Life was a perpetual  
‘ self-denial in the pleasures of this Life,  
‘ could he give the least colour, or sha-  
‘ dow of approbation of them? He who  
‘ preached up the Doctrin of the Cross,  
‘ could he have any liking to that, which  
‘ is directly contrary to that Doctrin?  
‘ Would any Man that looks upon the  
‘ jolly assembly in a Play-house, think  
‘ that these are Disciples of the crucified  
‘ God?

‘ God ? Do they not look liker *Mahomet’s*  
‘ Votaries, or *Epicurus* his Followers ?  
‘ Would not one think that they had  
‘ never heard of the Cross, and that who-  
‘ ever their Master was, they were disci-  
‘ plined only to live merrily ? Would not  
‘ one think that these persons are very dif-  
‘ ferent in their tempers from those Chri-  
‘ stians, the primitive Fathers do describe,  
‘ who trampled on the World, and were  
‘ afraid of any thing that favoured of its  
‘ satisfactions ? Would not one think, that  
‘ they are rather Disciples of some Hea-  
‘ then, *Jupiter*, or *Venus*, or *Flora*, or some  
‘ such wanton Minion, than of the grave,  
‘ the austere, and the serious *Jesus*, for  
‘ such he would have his followers to be,  
‘ these he would have tread in his steps ;  
‘ these he would have known by actions,  
‘ and a behaviour like his own, and is a  
‘ Play likely to plant this noble temper in  
‘ you ? Is the sight of a Comedy a pro-  
‘ bable means to make you live above the  
‘ World ? Are the profane railleries that  
‘ are used there, fit preparatives for au-  
‘ sterity of Conversation ? Is this the way  
‘ to promote gravity, to visit the Stage,  
‘ where all gravity is look’d upon as Pe-  
‘ dantry, and traduced as a thing proper  
‘ only for old Usurers, and Women who  
‘ are past their sins and vices ? Is this the  
‘ way

‘ way to advance seriousness, to be much  
 ‘ at places, where seriousness is censured  
 ‘ as a trick of Divines, or at the best, as  
 ‘ an effect of Vapours, and the natural re-  
 ‘ sult of melancholy and the spleen? As a  
 ‘ Christian, you are to shun the very ap-  
 ‘ pearances of evil, and is this your Obe-  
 ‘ dience, to delight in that which is evil,  
 ‘ to applaud it with your Smiles, to com-  
 ‘ mend it with your Tongue, and to en-  
 ‘ courage it by your presence?

‘ As a Christian, you are the *Salt of*  
 ‘ *the Earth*, and consequently  
 ‘ are to preserve your Neigh- *Matt. 5. 13.*  
 ‘ bour from Corruption; and is this the  
 ‘ way to preserve him from infection, by  
 ‘ your presence in such places, and being  
 ‘ as vain as he, to encourage not only the  
 ‘ actors in their unlawful profession, but  
 ‘ the Spectators too in their disobedience  
 ‘ to the Gospel? And what is this, but to  
 ‘ make your self a Proctor to Sin, to help  
 ‘ People to be undone, to assist them in  
 ‘ going to Hell, and to make your self  
 ‘ necessary to their folly?

‘ Are these the Christians, that are to  
 ‘ help one another to Heaven? Are these  
 ‘ the Christians, that are to go hand in  
 ‘ hand together, to Gods everlasting  
 ‘ Kingdom? Are these the lights, the  
 ‘ shining, the burning lights, that are to  
 ‘ light



‘light the ignorant Brother to the Inhe-  
 ‘ritance of the Saints in light ? Is not this  
 ‘to be Blind to the great design of the  
 ‘Gospel ? And if the Blind lead the Blind,  
 ‘shall not they both fall into the pit ?

‘*Wo to that Man by whom the Offence com-*  
 ‘*eth ; it had been better for him, that a Mill-*  
 ‘*stone were hang’d about his neck, and he*  
 ‘*drown’d in the midst of the Sea, saith our*  
 ‘great Master, *Matth. 18. 6.* Does not  
 ‘this threatening fright you ? Doth this  
 ‘put no sad thoughts into your Mind ?  
 ‘Do you believe he spoke true ? And do  
 ‘not you think you are concern’d ? What  
 ‘is your going to a Play-house, but giving  
 ‘Offence ? What is it but hardning other  
 ‘Men in their sins ? Is not this Tempting  
 ‘young People to those extravagancies  
 ‘they should detest ? Is not this justifying  
 ‘the Players profession, and to make  
 ‘them think that you approve of their  
 ‘ludicrous vocations ? Their profession  
 ‘is infamous by our Law, which looks  
 ‘upon them, as persons of no Honest  
 ‘calling ; and if you go to see their actings,  
 ‘and to see how they prostitute themselves,  
 ‘doth not this look like a Commendation  
 ‘of their undertakings ? And have not you  
 ‘Sins enough of your own to answer for,  
 ‘but you must transfer other mens upon  
 ‘you too ? Are you afraid, Gods anger  
 ‘to

‘to you will not be great enough, except  
‘you add your Neighbors offences, to  
‘make his Wrath the heavier? All those  
‘persons of your acquaintance that go to  
‘a Play, because you do, are all Scanda-  
‘lized by your example; and is not this  
‘putting a stumbling-block in your Neigh-  
‘bours way, especially if People believe  
‘that you have some goodness in you, or  
‘have a Name that you are Religious,  
‘how bold doth this make other persons  
‘to venture on these Vanities? And how  
‘dreadful must this make your account?  
‘Either you do not think much of another  
‘World, or if you do, you cannot but  
‘conclude, that these things will lie very  
‘heavy upon your Conscience one day?  
‘What if you do not think it to be sin,  
‘will your thinking so excuse you?  
‘Willful Ignorance is as bad as a known  
‘Sin, and how easily might you know  
‘such doings to be sinful? But being un-  
‘willing to be better informed, judge  
‘you, whether it will not aggravate your  
‘Condemnation? How could the Primi-  
‘tive Christians, know these things to be  
‘sinful? And is it not possible for you to  
‘know it? They had the Bible; so have  
‘you: They had the same precepts that  
‘you have, only they did not read the  
‘Scripture so superficially, as perhaps you  
I do,

‘ do, and that was the reason why they  
‘ came to the knowledge of this Sin, while  
‘ you halt betwixt two Opinions; Their  
‘ Affections did not lean and bend so  
‘ so much to the World as perhaps yours  
‘ do, and therefore they might easily per-  
‘ ceive *Christ’s* and the *Apostles* meaning,  
‘ while you, who dote too much upon  
‘ these outward things, have a Cloud or  
‘ mist before your eyes, that you cannot  
‘ discern the sense of the Holy Ghost.

‘ Your present divertisements may hide  
‘ the guilt from your Sight, but when the  
‘ Summons of a Terrible God to appear at  
‘ his Bar, shall rouse your Conscience  
‘ one Day, you’ll be of another Mind.

‘ How? Did Christ come down from  
‘ Heaven and die, and spill his Blood for  
‘ you, that you might securely indulge  
‘ your carnal Genius? Did he Sacrifice  
‘ himself for you, that you might please  
‘ your self with such fooleries? Hath he  
‘ appeased the Almighty’s Wrath for you,  
‘ that you might spend your time in a  
‘ Theatre? Is this a proper end of the  
‘ Mighty purchase he hath made? Did  
‘ such phantastick actions deserve so great  
‘ a condescension? Is it likely that he  
‘ would have astonish’d all the Angels of  
‘ Heaven with his descent into this valley  
‘ of Tears, if this security in carnal satisf-  
‘ factions

‘ factions had been his design ? One would  
‘ rather think, that so deep a humiliation  
‘ called for the greatest severities, and  
‘ was shewn on purpose to engage poor  
‘ Mortals to the profoundest acknowledg-  
‘ ments of his favour ; One would think,  
‘ that such Miracles of charity challenged  
‘ a most serious behaviour, and that after  
‘ this, Men should not dare to think of  
‘ trivial and impertinent things ; this is  
‘ more likely to be the end of his Incar-  
‘ nation and Suffering, than the other.  
‘ To delight in such Vanities is a disparage-  
‘ ment to his love, a blemish to his Cha-  
‘ rity, a disgrace to his Condescension,  
‘ and an undervaluing of so great a Mer-  
‘ cy ; And do you thus reward him ? Do  
‘ you thus requite his kindness ? Is this  
‘ the return you make him for his sweat  
‘ and agonies, for his sighs and groans,  
‘ for his pains and all his labours ? Did he  
‘ bleed, that you might grow strong in  
‘ Sin ? Did he die, that you might che-  
‘ rish the lusts of the Flesh ? Did he make  
‘ himself of no reputation, that you might  
‘ please your self with divertisements, in-  
‘ vented only to affront him, and to ren-  
‘ der his endeavours to convert our Souls  
‘ ineffectual.

‘ Have not you observed it ? Have not  
‘ you taken notice, how Men and Wo-



men, who have had some zeal for Religion, and very pious inclinations, how that zeal hath decreas'd upon their frequenting these Houses, how their goodness hath decay'd, how flat they are grown in Devotion, how weak in their Holy Performances? how dull in the Work of Meditation? how slovenly and superficial in Gods service? May be, they have kept up some outward shews, some external formality, some earnestness for the fringes of Religion, or for the ceremonial part of Christianity; But have not you seen, how they are become strangers to that life, which must adorn it, to that contemplation of good things, they formerly delighted in, to that strictness they once professed? Have not you seen how they have remitted in their Warmth, and how the holy fire that once burn'd in their Breasts is gone out? And is your Christianity so fierce and violent, that it needs a bridle? Is it so Hot, that it must have an extinguisher? Is it so flaming that it wants this stolen Water to quench it?

With what Face dare you approach the Table of your Lord, who have been a Spectator of such shews but a little before? With what eyes can you appear in the presence of that King of Kings,

'Kings, who have but a little before  
 'prostituted your Soul to the Devil?  
 'With what Conscience can you promise  
 'the Lord Jesus to follow him, when  
 'you intend to expose your self again to  
 'these Temptations? Do not you blush  
 'to think, how you serve both God and  
 'Mammon, Christ and the World, contrary  
 'to your Redeemers protestation, that  
 'you cannot serve two Masters? If you  
 'come to the Lords Table one Day, and  
 'run to a Play-house another, do not you  
 'destroy all that you built the Day before?  
 'If you come to the Supper of the Lord  
 'there to profess your sorrow for loving  
 'the World; are you in good earnest  
 'sorry for it, or are you not? If not,  
 'why do you play the Hypocrite, or  
 'do you think to put a cheat upon the  
 'Almighty, as if he did not see your  
 'heart, or would be taken with shew and  
 'pomp? If you are, how can you run  
 'into the same Temptation again, or go  
 'to a place where you will infallibly be  
 'tempted to the love of the World? Is  
 'not this to shut the Gates of Mercy  
 'against you? Is not this to make your  
 'self odious to that God whose favour  
 'you expect in the last day? Is not this  
 'to live in Contradictions? In this Sa-  
 'crament you profess to imitate your

‘ Lord in despising the World, and is  
‘ this imitation, to go one Day into the  
‘ House of God, and the next into a den  
‘ of Thieves; for so the Stage may justly  
‘ be called, where Men are robb’d of  
‘ their relish of spiritual objects.

‘ Whence hath come that Atheism, that  
‘ looseness, that indifferency in things  
‘ Divine, that low esteem of the tremen-  
‘ dous Mysteries of Christianity, which  
‘ of late like a Land-flood hath over-run  
‘ us? Have they not deriv’d their boldness  
‘ from these places? Have not the vices  
‘ represented there in jest, been practis’d  
‘ by the forward Youth at Home in good  
‘ earnest? And can a Christian have a  
‘ good Opinion of these Houses, where so  
‘ many have lost their Vertue? Can any  
‘ Man of reason think, that after all this  
‘ Mischief, they may be safely hugg’d and  
‘ applauded? Those many notorious For-  
‘ nications and Adulteries we have heard,  
‘ and know of, those bare-faced cheats,  
‘ mens boastings of their Sins, and glo-  
‘ rying in their Shame, their impudence  
‘ their Courage to do evil, their daring  
‘ to do things which sober Heathens have  
‘ detested, whence have they come in a  
‘ great Measure, but from these poison’d  
‘ Fountains? Why should we be afraid to  
‘ call a spade, a spade? Do not even  
‘ wicked

‘ wicked Men Confess so much, Men  
 ‘ who have been Guilty of such Crimes?  
 ‘ Shall Men of no great sense of Religion  
 ‘ complain of it, and shall a Christian do  
 ‘ any thing, that may contribute toward  
 ‘ the holding of them up?

‘ If wanton, lustful, and ob-  
 ‘ scene jests are expressly for- *Ephes. 5. 4.*  
 ‘ bid by the great Apostle, nay,  
 ‘ are not so much as to be named among  
 ‘ Christians, how can a Man that makes  
 ‘ Profession of that Religion, hear them,  
 ‘ or be taken with them, when Gods name  
 ‘ is profaned in such Houses? When Re-  
 ‘ ligion is mock’d? When vertue is ren-  
 ‘ dred odious? How can you hear it with-  
 ‘ out reproving the Men that do it? How  
 ‘ can you have Patience to let them talk  
 ‘ at this rate? You are bound by your  
 ‘ Profession to rebuke your Neighbour for  
 ‘ notorious Sins, and not to suffer iniquity  
 ‘ upon him; can you hear these things,  
 ‘ and see Men affront their Maker, and  
 ‘ be possess’d with a *dumb Devil*? How  
 ‘ can you discharge your Conscience, to  
 ‘ let your Neighbour do evil without giv-  
 ‘ ing him an Item of Gods displeasure? If  
 ‘ we are to exhort one another to take  
 ‘ heed, lest any of us be harden’d through  
 ‘ the deceitfulness of Sin, how can you  
 ‘ see Men harden themselves in their Sins



' on the Stage, without a fraternal admo-  
 ' nition? If you have no Courage to ad-  
 ' monish them, what makes you appear  
 ' there where you must be silent under the  
 ' indignities offered to your Master? Had  
 ' you a Friend whom you loved, and saw  
 ' his concerns in danger, his Reputation  
 ' attack'd, his Credit torn, his good name  
 ' wounded, would not you stand up in  
 ' his Vindication? You own Christ for  
 ' your Friend, and profess you love him,  
 ' and can you see his Laws trampled on,  
 ' and his Blood and Wounds made a Com-  
 ' plement of Speech, and not be moved at  
 ' it? Or if you have some little regret  
 ' upon your Spirits, where is your Tongue  
 ' to speak for your Friend? Do you think  
 ' such Men are like to be his Favorites?  
 ' And is not this to fall under the lash of  
 ' that threatning, *Whosoever*  
*Mat. 8. 38.* ' shall be ashamed of me and of  
 ' my Gospel, in this adulterous  
 ' and sinful Generation, of him shall the Son  
 ' of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the  
 ' glory of his Father; since you have not  
 ' Spirit enough to reprove such Sinners,  
 ' why do not you stay away? Why do  
 ' not you keep out of their Company?  
 ' You are obliged to do either one or the  
 ' other, if you cherish any hopes of Sal-  
 ' vation; and since to reprove them you  
 ' are

' are ashamed, staying away must necessarily be your Duty.

' Do you ever examine your self at night about the actions of the Day? And if you do, doth not your presence at such shews, and your being pleased with them, fly into your Face? Do not you think, *what have I done to day? How did I spend my time, might not I have spent it better, than at a Play-house? How many persons have I harden'd, and confirm'd in their Sins by my Example? How much lightness and vanity have I encouraged by my presence? Hath not such a Sin been pleasing to me? Have not I been delighted with seeing my neighbour abus'd? Have not I been tickled with Mens speaking ill of him? Had God struck me Dead in that place, how sad would my Condition have been? How many vain and foolish thoughts have these sights sent into my Mind?* If you examine your self in this manner and find these effects, have not you reason to ask God forgiveness? And if you ask him forgiveness, how dare you run upon the same rock again? Will you Sin wilfully after this? Will you Sin against your knowledge, will you do that again, which will require a new repentance? What is this but a mock-repentance, to go on in a circle

I 5

of.

‘ of confessing and sinning, of sinning and  
‘ confessing ?

‘ But I doubt, this self-examination is  
‘ a thing you do not trouble your Head  
‘ with, and you shun it, as Men do their  
‘ Creditors that dun them; you are afraid  
‘ it will fill your Head with scruples, and  
‘ therefore avoid it, as those who are un-  
‘ willing to look into their accounts, that  
‘ they may not be surpriz’d with the sum  
‘ they owe; if visiting the Stage makes  
‘ you neglect this self-examination, it  
‘ makes you neglect a known Duty; and  
‘ if so, it must be sinful, and if sinful, how  
‘ dare you meddle with it ?

‘ Do but take a view of the writings of  
‘ the Primitive Fathers, and you’ll find  
‘ them unanimous in this assertion, that in  
‘ our Baptism, when we renounce the  
‘ Devil and his works, and the Pomp and  
‘ glory of the World, we do particularly  
‘ renounce Stage-Plays, and such ludicrous  
‘ representations. They that lived nea-  
‘ rest to the Apostolical times, in all pro-  
‘ bability knew, what was meant by this  
‘ renunciation, and this they profess to be  
‘ the sense of it, this they assure us is meant  
‘ by those poms and glories, and why  
‘ should we presume to put a new sense  
‘ upon that Vow ? They received this  
‘ interpretation from the Apostles, and  
‘ pro-

‘propogated it to posterity, and in this  
‘sense we make the Abjuration.

‘Sir, Have you abjured these things  
‘in your Baptism, and dare you venture  
‘on them? Have you renounced them,  
‘and dare you fall in love with them?  
‘Have you protested in the presence of  
‘God and Angels, that you will not med-  
‘dle with them, and will you break your  
‘Vow? Have you solemnly professed be-  
‘fore the Congregation, that you will  
‘not have any affection for them, and do  
‘you make nothing of perfidiousness?

‘How darest thou O Christian,  
‘run into a Play-house after Bap- Salvian. de  
‘tism, saith Salvian, when thou gubern. Dci.  
‘hast confessed those very Plays to lib. 6.  
‘be the Works of the Devil? Thou hast re-  
‘nounced the Devil and these Stage-Plays, so  
‘that if thou willingly and wittingly frequen-  
‘test them, it’s evident that thou returnest to the  
‘Devil too, for thou hast renounced both, and  
‘hast professed both to be one, so that if thou  
‘return to one, thou returnest to both.

‘I know what is commonly objected,  
‘that the reason why the Fathers are so  
‘much against Christians seeing of a  
‘Play, was, because the heathenish Ido-  
‘latries were acted to the Life upon the  
‘Stage, and that proselytes might not be  
‘in



' in danger of being enticed to idolatry,  
 ' was the great motive, why they inveigh'd  
 ' so much against fights of that nature;  
 ' but those that use this plea, most certainly  
 ' have not read the Fathers, or if they have  
 ' read them, have not considered all their  
 ' arguments; for to go no farther than

*Tertul.* ' *Tertullian*, after he had condemn'd  
*de spect.* ' these fights for the idolatries com-  
 ' mitted on the Stage, he produces

' other reasons for which they are utterly  
 ' unlawful; as 1. Because the Spirit of the  
 ' Gospel, is a Spirit of gentleness, but the  
 ' actors are forced to put themselves into a  
 ' posture of Wrath and anger,

c. 15. ' and fury, and the spectators  
 ' themselves cannot behold them  
 without being put into a passion.

' 2. Because vanity, which is  
 c. 15. ' proper to the Stage, is alto-  
 ' gether foreign to Christianity.

c. 15. ' 3. Because we are not to consent  
 ' to Peoples Sins. 4. Because Men

c. 16. ' are abused in these places, and  
 ' neither Princes nor People spa-  
 ' red, and this being unlawful else-where,  
 ' must be unlawful too upon the Stage.

' 5. Because all immodesty and  
 c. 17. ' scurrility is forbid by the Law of  
 ' the Gospel, not only acting of it,  
 ' but seeing and hearing it Acted. 6. Be-  
 ' cause

' cause all Players are Hypocrites,  
 ' seem to be what they are not, c. 23.  
 ' and all Hypocrisie is condemn'd  
 ' by the Gospel. 7. Because the Actors  
 ' very often belie their Sex, and  
 ' put on Womens apparel, which c. 23.  
 ' is forbid by the law of God.  
 ' 8. Because these Plays dull and damp  
 ' Devotion and seriousness, which  
 ' is and ought to be the indeleble c. 25.  
 ' character of Christians. 9. Be-  
 ' cause it is a disparagement to God to lift  
 ' up those hands to applaud a  
 ' Player, which we use to lift up c. 25.  
 ' to the Throne of Grace. 10.  
 ' Because experience shews, how the  
 ' Devil hath sometimes possess'd  
 ' Christians in a Play-house, and c. 26.  
 ' being afterwards cast out, con-  
 ' fess, that he had reason to enter into  
 ' them, because he found them in his  
 ' ownplace. 11. Because no Man  
 ' can serve two Masters, God c. 26.  
 ' and the World, as those Chri-  
 ' stians pretend to do, that frequent both  
 ' the Church and the Stage. 12. Because  
 ' though some Speeches in a Play  
 ' are witty and ingenious, yet c. 27.  
 ' there is Poison at the bottom,  
 ' and vice is only coloured, and gilded  
 ' with fine Language, and curious em-  
 ' blemes,

‘blems, that it may go down more glib,  
 ‘and ruin the Soul more artificially.

‘These are some of *Tertullians* Arguments, and he that shall attentively consider them, will easily find that they  
 ‘are not only applicable to such Comedies where idolatry is acted, but to  
 ‘those of this age, where scurrility, vanity and immodesty, and other vices are  
 ‘incouraged; and whereas some pretended, that if they saw no Plays, they  
 ‘should want sport, and be without  
 ‘necessary Recreation, the learned *Presbyter* doth very handsomly reply; *Why*

‘art thou so abominably ungrateful,  
 c. 29. ‘to complain of want of Recreation,  
 ‘when God hath given thee such great  
 ‘variety of pleasures? For what can be more  
 ‘pleasant, than to be reconciled to God the  
 ‘Father, and the knowledge of the Truth, our  
 ‘deliverance from darkness and error, and a  
 ‘free Pardon of all our Sins? What greater  
 ‘pleasure can there be, than the loathing of  
 ‘carnal pleasure, contempt of the World, true  
 ‘Christian liberty, a Conscience void of offence,  
 ‘a spotless Life, Freedom from the Fear of  
 ‘Death, trampling on the Heathen Gods, expulsion of Devils, the gift of healing; prayer  
 ‘for illumination, and living to Gods glory?  
 ‘These are the pleasures, these are the Plays of  
 ‘Christians, holy, free and perpetual; in such  
 ‘things

things as these, fancy thou seest a Play ; here  
see the course of the World, behold the gliding  
Time, view the distance betwixt this Life  
and Eternity, expect the Consummation of all  
things, defend the Church, rouse thy self at  
Gods signal, listen to the Arch-angels Trumpet,  
glory in the Martyrs Laurels ; If learning  
and knowledge do delight thee, behold in the  
Scripture there are verses enough, witty sen-  
tences enough, songs enough, and voices  
enough ; no fables of Poets, but solid Truths ;  
no siphistry, but majestick simplicity ; wouldst  
thou see Gladiators and Wrestlers, here thou  
hast them, here thou mayst see lasciviousness  
overcome by chastity, perjury by faithfulness,  
cruelty by mercy, wantonness by modesty, and  
these are our Olympick games, in which he is  
Crown'd that strives for mastery ; Dost thou  
love to see Blood drawn in a publick shew ?  
Behold thou hast the Blood of Jesus ; and  
what a noble sight will shortly appear to our  
eyes, even the coming of our glorious Lord,  
the exultation of Angels, the Resurrection  
of his holy ones, the stately Kingdom of be-  
lieving Souls, and the Sight of the new Je-  
rusalem ! There is another shew behind,  
even the last day of Judgment, a day unlook'd  
for, a day despised by fools, a day wherein  
the old world will be swallowed up of Fire !  
How glorious a Sight will that be, when I  
shall behold with Astonishment and joy, so  
many



' many Kings, whom their flatterers placed  
 ' among the Stars, sighing in outward darkness  
 ' with Jupiter, and their parasites? So many  
 ' Persecutors of the Christian name melting in  
 ' insulting Flames! So many Philosophers with  
 ' their Disciples, who gave out, that God was  
 ' careless of the affairs of this lower World,  
 ' trembling before Christ's Tribunal! At that  
 ' time I shall know Tragœdians by their loud  
 ' cry in Misery, Stage players by their being  
 ' tormented by Fire more than other Men, the  
 ' Charioteers in the publick Games, by their  
 ' being red upon a flaming wheel, and the  
 ' Mimick by his being tossed in sheets of Fire.  
 ' Thus far that excellent Man, whom  
 ' St. Cyprian exactly imitates. And cer-  
 ' tainly he that hath the same sense of  
 ' Religion that he had, cannot but be of  
 ' the same Opinion. So that it is for  
 ' want of searching, and diving into the  
 ' Nature of Christianity, and what is more,  
 ' for want of feeling the power of Reli-  
 ' gion, that makes Men speak in Vindi-  
 ' cation of Plays and Interludes.

' What a pitiful shift is it to say, that  
 ' great good may be gained by them,  
 ' when it is plain that the evil which  
 ' ensues upon them, do signally prepon-  
 ' derate and out-weigh the pretended  
 ' Benefit? What if a moral Saying, or a  
 ' witty Sentence, or an ingenious Apo-  
 ' thegm

' thegm lie scattered here and there among  
 ' the Rubbish, will that grain of good-  
 ' ness counter-balance a whole talent of  
 ' ill that's seen there, or got by seeing it?  
 ' Some have been so vain, as to give out,  
 ' that they may learn as much by a Play  
 ' as by a Sermon; but not to mention,  
 ' that such persons spiritual Appetite is  
 ' extreemly vitiated, while they continue  
 ' in this Opinion, they'll never be much  
 ' edified, either by a Play or a Sermon;  
 ' and till they have a nobler Opinion of  
 ' Gods Ordinance, it's just with God to  
 ' suffer the Devil to lead them Captive at  
 ' his will. And what are the mighty Ad-  
 ' vantages Men get by the Representations  
 ' of the Stage? May be they learn to  
 ' Court a Mistress well, or the Vanities  
 ' they see there, serve them to maintain a  
 ' loose Discourse, or it enables them to  
 ' make the Company Merry; but are  
 ' these things that tend to reformation of  
 ' Life and Manners? Who ever learned to  
 ' abandon a Sin he is addicted to, by see-  
 ' ing its Punishment on the Stage? Or  
 ' who ever thought himself obliged to  
 ' practise that Virtue which he sees Acted  
 ' on the *Theatre*, except it be, to resent  
 ' an Affront that's offer'd him, and to  
 ' know how to maintain the Punctilio's  
 ' of Honour and Bravery? And are these  
 ' Chri-

‘ Christian Virtues ? Are these the Graces  
‘ that must make us glorious in the sight  
‘ of God ? Such Arguments are signs of a  
‘ desperate Cause, and tacit accusations  
‘ of the illness of the thing, since the  
‘ Aprons that cover it are made of Fig-  
‘ leaves.

‘ And what if some Plays be more inno-  
‘ cent, and not so prophane as others ; if  
‘ I go to one, doth not my example en-  
‘ courage Men to go and see those which  
‘ are more loose and wanton ? If I mean  
‘ to discourage Sin in others by my  
‘ Actions, I must not give them occasion  
‘ to do that which is evil : Sensual Men  
‘ distinguish not betwixt the more harm-  
‘ less and the more hurtful ; and if I en-  
‘ courage the one by my presence, I en-  
‘ courage the other too ; and if by my  
‘ example I approve of the Players Pro-  
‘ fession in one thing, I approve of it in  
‘ another too, and harden them in their  
‘ Folly ; not to mention, that my seeing  
‘ the more harmless, as I call them, will  
‘ in time entice me to see the more pro-  
‘ phane ; for Sin is catching, and one  
‘ Vanity draws on another, and from the  
‘ lesser we run to greater, and when the  
‘ horror of Sin is once abated in our minds,  
‘ the things which are most contrary to  
‘ Christianity, begin to appear harmless,  
‘ and

‘ and thus the Soul glides insensibly into  
‘ darkness, and eternal Misery.

‘ That which you use to pretend some-  
‘ times, that there are *Divines* of the *Church*  
‘ of *England*, who approve of these Shews,  
‘ hath nothing of validity in it; for sup-  
‘ pose there were some, who allow of  
‘ these Vanities, doth it therefore follow,  
‘ that the *Church* of *England* doth encour-  
‘ age them? The Opinions of some  
‘ *Divines* are not the Standard of our  
‘ Church, nor are the private Sentiments  
‘ of a few Men Prescriptions for her to  
‘ go by.

‘ The Church of *England* hath no where  
‘ declared so much, and as long as the  
‘ Church is silent, it’s presumption to in-  
‘ terpret the fond Opinions of some Men,  
‘ as her Rule and Doctrin. How can our  
‘ Church countenance such things, that  
‘ professes strict adherence to the Word of  
‘ God, and looks upon the judgments of  
‘ Men, that are contrary to it, as *Heterodox*  
‘ and *Erroneous*? At this rate you might as  
‘ well argue, that because some *Divines*  
‘ have been seen at a Play, that therefore  
‘ they have encouragement from the  
‘ Doctrin of our Church. The Doctrin  
‘ of a Church is one thing, and the  
‘ practice of some of her pretended mem-  
‘ bers is another. The Churches case  
‘ would



‘ would be very hard, if she were to  
‘ answer for all the misdemeanours  
‘ of her seeming Votaries ; and who  
‘ knows not, how in all Churches the  
‘ professors generally deviate from the  
‘ rules that are extant in their Books and  
‘ Canons ?

‘ But after all, it’s worth enquiring,  
‘ whether those Divines you speak of be  
‘ of the graver, or the younger sort ; that  
‘ some young Men who want experience,  
‘ and perhaps a lively sense of Religion,  
‘ should be taken with these shews, I do  
‘ not wonder ; but who takes a raw youth,  
‘ and such as think any thing great and  
‘ good, that’s witty, and serves to tickle  
‘ the fancy, who takes such Men for  
‘ judges in an affair of this importance ?  
‘ As to the graver sort, I doubt you’ll find  
‘ none, or but very few, that are favou-  
‘ rers of these spectacles, or if they do  
‘ declare at any time, that if Plays were  
‘ reduced to their true *decorum*, they  
‘ might be inoffensive, from hence it will  
‘ not follow, that they countenance the  
‘ common *Tragedies* and *Comedies*, which  
‘ so manifestly go beyond the limits of  
‘ decency.

‘ And what if you do go but now and  
‘ then, doth your going but seldom ju-  
‘ stifie the action ? All that this excuse  
‘ will

‘will amount to, is only this, that you  
‘do not Sin so often as other Men; but  
‘doth this free you from the guilt, or  
‘make you innocent in the sight of God?  
‘How would you take it, if a Man should  
‘give you a Box on the Ear but now and  
‘then? Or how would you resent it, to  
‘have your good name taken away by a  
‘person, not always, but whenever his  
‘humour prompts him? And from hence  
‘you may easily guess at the weakness of  
‘this exception, and if you have that  
‘mean opinion of God, that low esteem  
‘of his greatness, as to think, that to  
‘affront him but now and then can do no  
‘harm, you are unworthy to be his Dis-  
‘ciple, and judge your self unworthy of  
‘Eternal Life.

‘But I am forced to go, you say, my  
‘Superiours command me to wait upon  
‘them to a Play, and how can I refuse  
‘it, except I will lose their favour, and  
‘the Place I hold under them? And is  
‘this such a Bug-bear to fright you from  
‘your duty? To whom have you greater  
‘obligations, to God or Man? If to God,  
‘why dare not you prefer his favour be-  
‘fore the favour of Men, and be guided  
‘more by his Laws, than by the benevo-  
‘lence of dust and ashes? Have not you  
‘courage to make a vow, and when you  
‘are

‘ are solicited by your Superiours to go,  
‘ cannot you speak out, and tell them,  
‘ that you lie under the obligation of a  
‘ vow not to go, and who will be so pro-  
‘ fane, as to desire you to break it ? Had  
‘ you rather Sin than displease Men, or is  
‘ a poor Creature more terrible to you,  
‘ than he who thunders in the Heavens ?  
‘ If you are perswaded in your Conscience  
‘ that to be present at these shews is sinful,  
‘ shall a creatures Smiles make you ven-  
‘ ture the displeasure of the most High ?  
‘ And what if you lose something con-  
‘ siderable by pleasing God ? Hath God  
‘ no ways to make you amends for your  
‘ losses ? Hath he no Glory, no King-  
‘ dom, no reward, no recompence to  
‘ redintegrate your fortune ? If you lose  
‘ this World for his sake, is not the felicity  
‘ of the next recompence enough ? But  
‘ why should you mistrust him even in  
‘ this present life ? He that made *Moses*  
‘ after he had left the Court of *Egypt*,  
‘ General of his own Army and advanced  
‘ *Joseph*, who hated to be great and Rich  
‘ by Sin, to be *Viceroy* of the *Realm*, and  
‘ preserved *Daniel* in his grandeur for this  
‘ reason, because he would not depart  
‘ from his Conscienciousness ; is his Arm  
‘ shortned or is his Strength abated, that  
‘ he can do nothing equivalent to all this ?  
‘ Are

‘ Are not the hearts of Men in his hand,  
‘ and doth not he turn them as streams of  
‘ Water? How often doth he make it  
‘ appear to the World, that where a mans  
‘ ways please the Lord, he makes his very  
‘ Enemies to be at peace with him? Nay  
‘ how often do these generous self-denials  
‘ work by Gods providence upon Superi-  
‘ ours, and they that at first solicited a  
‘ Man to do that which was vain, and  
‘ contrary to the Laws of Religion, when  
‘ they see him resolute in his conscienci-  
‘ ousness, how often have they been per-  
‘ swaded to reflect upon themselves, at  
‘ least to have a better Opinion of the  
‘ person who fears God more than  
‘ them?

‘ What you have often told me, that  
‘ from this way of reasoning it would  
‘ follow, that it is unlawful to write or to  
‘ read a Play, will deserve some conside-  
‘ ration: As for the writing of it, though  
‘ Poetry be a thing lawful and commen-  
‘ dable, and is sufficiently warranted by  
‘ the writers of Divine Poems in holy  
‘ writ, yet that will not justify all the  
‘ Subjects, Poets pitch upon, and a con-  
‘ sciencious Man will take as much care,  
‘ that the Subject he writes of, be grave  
‘ and serious, at least innocent, as he  
‘ would



‘ would do of his discourse in common  
 ‘ Conversation.

– ‘ I do not doubt, but that writing  
 ‘ things obscene and filthy, and unde-  
 ‘ cent, and contrary to good manners,  
 ‘ and whereby others may be scandalized,  
 ‘ and either drawn into Sin, or harden’d  
 ‘ in it, is as bad as speaking of them.  
 ‘ Without all peradventure a Man may be  
 ‘ witty without being prophane, and ex-  
 ‘ ercise his Fancy to the Edification of  
 ‘ readers, without launching out into  
 ‘ things, at which Nature and Religion  
 ‘ teaches us to blush ; and I need only put  
 ‘ you in Mind of what the incomparable  
 ‘ Mr. Cowley saith, in his Preface to his  
 ‘ works, speaking of the admirable Subjects  
 ‘ that the Scripture affords for the exer-  
 ‘ cise of Wit and Poetry ; *It is not without*  
 ‘ *grief, saith he, and indignation, that I be-*  
 ‘ *hold that Divine science employing all her*  
 ‘ *inexhaustible riches of wit and eloquence,*  
 ‘ *either in the wicked and beggarly flattery of*  
 ‘ *great persons, or the unmanly idolizing of*  
 ‘ *foolish Women, or the wretched affectation of*  
 ‘ *scurril laughter, or at best on the confused*  
 ‘ *and antiquated dreams of senseless fables, and*  
 ‘ *metamorphoses.*

‘ As for reading of modern Plays, he  
 ‘ that considers what an aversion from se-  
 ‘ riousness, and better things, the reading  
 ‘ of

' of them causes in the younger sort, will  
 ' find no great reason to encourage them  
 ' in such trifles, but rather to dissuade  
 ' them all he can from studies of this na-  
 ' ture; and though I believe that a grave,  
 ' serious Man, whose senses are thoroughly  
 ' exercised to discern betwixt good and  
 ' evil, may lawfully peruse them, to see  
 ' the humour of the Age, and to know  
 ' how to obviate and confute the debau-  
 ' cheries, and errors which are growing,  
 ' and tending to the ruin of good manners,  
 ' as skilful Physitians may meddle with  
 ' Poison, to make antidotes of it; yet to  
 ' Persons whose understandings are slippery  
 ' and weak, whose passions are stronger  
 ' than their reason, and who have already  
 ' too great a tincture of sensuality, and  
 ' consequently may easily encrease the ill  
 ' humour by such divertisements, they  
 ' ought to be debarr'd from them by  
 ' those, who have the care of their Edu-  
 ' cation.

' These Sir, are my thoughts of the  
 ' Query you proposed to me, and though  
 ' the Letter be somewhat long, yet I hope  
 ' the Arguments I have laid down, are not  
 ' impertinent; that they are liable to ex-  
 ' ceptions, I question not, being sensible  
 ' that it's easier to cavil, than to answer,  
 ' and where Men are resolved to main-

K

'tain

tain the vain humour, they have imbibed from Conversation, they will always have something to say against the most sober truths and assertions. The drift and design of the Gospel is certainly on our side ; if any be fond of preferring the dictates of Flesh and Blood, or the suggestions of the World, before the mortifying lessons of our crucified Redeemer, all that we can say is this, that we would have healed *Babylon*, but she would not be healed.

I shall only add my wishes and prayers, that what you have read here, may be a means to bring you to a noble sense of a better World, and convince you, that the way to attain a future bliss, is very different from that, which leads to sensual delights and satisfactions : Our natures are generally too prone to gratify the Flesh, and we had not need add fuel to the Fire, but to do all we can to Quench that, which is already kindled, that after our self-denials here, we may reign with the self-denying *Jesus*, with whom we cannot live hereafter, except we suffer with him here, and endure the loss of the pleasures of Sin for a season ; nor sit with him in his Throne, except we continue with him in his Temptations here. And I am  
per-

‘perswaded, that did you live more in  
‘Heaven, and gave your self time to me-  
‘ditate on the things which are not seen;  
‘Did you incorporate those everlasting  
‘joys with your Mind, and riveted the  
‘belief of that endless bliss into your  
‘very Spirits, that your Faith might be  
‘the substance of things unseen, and the  
‘evidence of the treasures hoped for, you  
‘would despise these shews and glories of  
‘the World, as much as you do value and  
‘esteem them now, and would be so far  
‘from stopping your ears against the rea-  
‘sons I have given, that you would study  
‘and invent more, to control the vulgar  
‘errors of mankind.

‘Get but once a true relish of spiri-  
‘tual things, and you will look between  
‘anger and scorn on these trivial Objects,  
‘admired by the vulgar. And why should  
‘not you raise your Soul above the bub-  
‘bles of external Pomp? Whatever diffi-  
‘culty there may be in the attempt, the  
‘Fruit that grows on the Tree at last,  
‘will sufficiently recompence your labour.  
‘Our Souls are active or unactive, accor-  
‘ding as we take pains with them, and  
‘though there be some irksomness in  
‘swimming against the stream of carnal  
‘inclinations, yet if the Hill be once con-  
‘quered, the serene Air that is on the



'top of it, the gentle Gales, the glorious  
 'Sun-shine, the sweetness of Rest, that  
 'Crowns all the Hardships, will make  
 'you bless the Day that you begun to  
 'Mind the things which belong unto your  
 'Peace. And that you may do so, is the  
 'unfeigned Desire of,

S I R,

*Your daily Orator at the*

*Throne of Mercy, &c.*

And having hitherto discoursed of the  
 Nature of sensual Delights and Recrea-  
 tions, and how far a Christian is bound  
 to deny himself in them upon the ac-  
 count of a future Judgment ; to compleat  
 these Meditations, it will be necessary to  
 draw some useful Inferences from the  
 Premises.

### I N F E R E N C E S.

1. *This clears what the Wise Man says,*  
*Eccles. 7. 2. That 'tis better to go to the*  
*House of Mourning, than to the House of Fea-*  
*sting. So sad a Prospect, as that of a fu-*  
*ture*

ture Judgment is, one would think, were enough to hush all Mirth and Jollity whatsoever; however, we may rationally conclude, that it's enough to turn the Byass, and make the Soul have less Affection for Mirth, than Sorrow and Severity of Behaviour. The antient Heathens make use of this Apologue; Sorrow and Mirth presented themselves one Day before *Jupiter*, and desired him to determine which of them two was best, and most to be chosen. *Sorrow* pleaded, that it made Men pensive and serious, caus'd them to think, brought them to a due Sense of their own Frailty, and a profound Veneration of the Divine Majesty, made them compassionate and tender-hearted, besides many other Advantages the dull World took no notice of. *Mirth* on the other side alledged, that it cheer'd the Spirits, made them lively and fit for Service, enabled them to do great and noble things, made Men good Company and belov'd of their Neighbours, beguil'd the tedious Hours of Humane Life, and was an Emblem of the Joys, the Gods themselves were drunk withal. *Jupiter* having heard them plead a considerable time, and weigh'd the Reasons on both sides, found the decision of the Case so difficult, that he dismiss them without

any other Answer but this, that he could not tell. But what a Heathen Oracle could not resolve, a Christian, guided by the Word of Life, may soon determine: And he that believes the tremendous things, the Scripture speaks of, cannot but conclude, that there is less Danger in Seriousness and Sorrow, than in Mirth and Jollity, because there are fewer Temptations in the one than there are in the other. Our Natures certainly are not so prone to Sin in a Charnel House as they are at a Theatre, nor our Affections so apt to run out into Licentiousness in a Church, as they are at a publick Shew. And though a Man may be strong, and couragious, and able to defie all Dangers, yet a *Sampson* may be overcome by a *Dalilah*; and if he be not overcome, yet something may stick by him, which may put an everlasting stop to his Growth in Grace and Virtue.

He that goes much to the House of Mourning provides infinitely better for the Safety of his Soul than he that frequents the House of Mirth and Feasting: the former walks in a beaten Path, whereas the other ventures over a narrow Bridge, or treads on the edge of a Wall, where it's possible he may come off with Safety; but for one that escapes without a Fall, there

there are Twenty and Forty that miscarry. He that presses through a Hedge of Thorns may possibly get through without tearing his Cloaths ; but he that hath Patience till he comes to a Gate, and opens it, and so passes on, takes the surer way.

The wisest Men in all Ages have judged it better to converse with Spectacles of Misery, than with Objects favouring of external Splendour. He that visits a Hospital, where he beholds variety of distressed Creatures, some Lame, some Blind, some Wounded, some Deaf, some Sick, some roaring under grievous Pains, will certainly go away more edified than he that feeds his Eyes with all the Gayeties of a luxurious Court ; the former may leave some kindly Impressions upon him, and oblige him to admire the distinguishing Mercy, Goodness, and Compassion of God, who hath suffer'd no such Accident to befall him, and season his Heart with Pity and Compassion, with Tenderneſs and Charity ; whereas the excess and extravagance of the other will, do what he can, leave a Touch of Lightness and Vanity upon his Affections. That's the Reason why some provident Men heretofore, have carried their Winding-Sheets



with them in their March, others digg'd their Sepulchres and Graves in their Gardens, others at their Solemn Feasts have had a Death's-Head served up, and placed upon the Table, others in a certain Room in their House, have set an empty Coffin on purpose, that looking upon these Spectacles often, their Minds might be taken off from Admiration of worldly Satisfaction, and placed upon Objects which might furnish them with more melancholick Contemplations: And this, in all Probability, will be the effect of conversing with such Objects, if we view them, not as they belong to our Trade, but as thinking Men and Philosophers. The Sexton that digs his Neighbours Grave hath an Object serious enough before him; but he goes to it as a Man that must maintain his Family with the Gain, and therefore is never the wiser for his Familiarity with such Spectacles. The Chyrurgion that goes among the Lame and Bruised, and Wounded, with no higher ends, than to fill his Purse, and to discharge the Office of his Art, will come home as little edified as he went: But he whose choice of such mortified Objects is voluntary and deliberate, attended with suitable Designs of meliorating and advancing the Mind, cannot but return enrich'd with that Wisdom,

dom, the Merchandise of which is more precious than that of Gold and Silver.

Whatever the merry Sinner may think, it's better to Weep than to Laugh. Our Great Master, the Lord Jesus, who is a good Christian's Pattern, was of this Opinion : And in Imitation of him, not a few eminent Saints have preferr'd a Feast of Tears before a Banquet of Mirth and sensual Pleasure : *Arsenius*, *Olympias*, *Domnina*, *Abraham* the Hermite, the solitary *Pambo*, and *St. Austin*, are famous in History for their Tears ; to *St. Jerom* they were in the nature of daily Bread, and he professes, that when his Eyes were fullest of Tears, he saw the Quires of Angels, and could discern the Orders of *Seraphim* and *Cherubim* ; such a Perspicuity of sight do Tears give to a holy Soul. That which made these great Men weep so much, was either a Sense of their own and other mens Offences, or a lively Prospect of the Love of God, or a glorious foresight of the Joys above. But, worldly Sorrow is no Virtue ; and he that weeps much, either because he cannot have those Conveniences he would have, or is cross'd and disappointed in his Designs, or because he hath lost such a great Man's Favour, or because some other Loss befalls him, weeps in vain, nay Sins by his weeping;

and his Sin, if he continue impenitent, brings on Death, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Floods of Tears upon a mere temporal Account, are insignificant in Heaven, and no more than Water spilt upon the Ground; such Tears God doth not put into his Bottle, nor have the blessed Angels any Charge to number the drops that fall; but where Religion, and a mighty Sense of God, and Tenderneſs of his Honour and Glory, cauſes Rivers of Tears, and where the Soul hath ſo delicate a Taſte that it cannot think of God without weeping, nor ſpeak of him without weeping, nor reflect upon his Goodneſs without weeping, there the Man is come up to a Perfection, which is the very Suburbs of Heaven.

It's true, all People cannot weep, nor are they therefore in a damnable Condition; for they may be ſincere in Goodneſs, and yet not be able to expreſs their Sincerity in Tears, though I am apt to believe, that it is for want of refining the Soul into a high Reliſh of Divine Objects, that puts a ſtop to theſe ſacred Floods in moſt Men; yet where they can weep, and ſomething they ſee in God, or in the Word of God, or in the Providences of God, is the true Cauſe of thoſe Tears, every drop is richer than a Diamond, and ſuch a Soul may vye Happineſs with the  
greateſt

greatest Monarchs. They are inestimable Treasures ; and though Man knows not how to value them, yet the Spirits above esteem them at a mighty rate, and magnifie them in Gods Presence, *Luke* 15. 10.

It's a huge Mistake, that Men cannot rejoyce except they Laugh ; there are Tears of Joy as well as Tears of Grief, and the very Heathen saw, that true Joy was a very serious thing. Hence it was, that they confined true Joy to their Philosophers, and left the louder Laughter to Slaves, and Carters, and Ploughmen : And how often have I seen the richest Joys bubble forth from the largest Tears ? Nor would Men in those Circumstances change Condition with the most potent Prince in the World, such Content, such Satisfaction, such Riches, such Wealth, appears in these Tears which Religion forces.

How much better is it to be afflicted where our Prosperity and a good Conscience are inconsistent, than to enjoy Kingdoms and Principalities without the light of Gods Countenance ? This was the excellent choice of *Moses*, and of all the Martyrs of old, who were content to be sawn asunder, to be stoned, to be tormented, to wander about in Caves and  
Dens,



Dens, weeping and destitute, rather than defile their Souls with Sin; which puts me in mind of the good Advice St. *Jerom* gave to his Friend *Heliodorus*, *Did the Babe, thy Grand child, saith he, hang about thy Neck; should thy Mother that bare thee, bid thee look upon the Breasts thou hast sucked; should thine own Father lie prostrate at thy Feet, and intreat thee to spare thy self, and to forbear venturing on the Strictness and Severities of Religion; get away from them, my Friend, and with dry Eyes fly unto the Banner of Christ Jesus: In this case, to be cruel is the greatest Piety.* This was the Case of the Primitive Believers, who preferred their Distresses before *Nero's* Chair of State, and took greater Pleasure in their seemingly forlorn Condition, than *Claudius* or *Caligula* in their Affluence. In the midst of their Tears they were greater Men than their Persecutors; and though they wanted all things, and their Enemies had all that Heart could wish, yet they justly believed themselves happier in their Funeral Dress, than the other in their Triumphs.

The Man that roars in a Tavern, or sings in an Ale-house, or rejoyces in his Sin, had more need to Wish, that his Head were Water, and his eyes a Fountain of Tears; were he in his Wits he would

would do so : But his Reason is distorted, his Understanding darkned, his Eyes blinded, his Mind unhing'd, his Desires perverted, his Affections led astray, and like a distracted Creature, he rejoyces in his Nakedness.

Ah brutish and inconsiderate Soul ! Thou weepest to see a Child or a near Relation dye, and canst thou see thy Soul die, and be robb'd of that Goodness which must give her Life, and be unconcerned ? Thou weepest at the loss of a Thousand Pounds, and canst thou remember how thou lovest God's Favour, and all Right and Interest in the Merits of a crucified Saviour, and keep thine Eyes dry ? Thou weepest to see a Friend drowning or burning in a merciless Fire, and canst thou think how thou flingest thy self into the Furnace of God's Wrath, makest his Anger kindle, and wax hot against thee, and dost what thou canst to turn it into a Fire, which no Man, no Angel can Quench, and will no Tears flow into thine Eyes ? How barbarous, how inhumane is thy Joy ? What dost thou rejoyce in ? That Sin which makes thee merry, that Folly which cheers thy Spirit, what is it but Ingratitude to thy kindest Benefactor ? What is it but requiting the greatest good with the greatest Evil ? What is it,

it, but contempt of him who keeps thy Soul in Life? What is it but bidding defiance to him who carries thee on his Wings, and out-does the tenderness of a Mother, the care of a Father, and doth all that's fitting to Guard thy Soul from Ruin? And are these fit things to rejoyce in? Are these fit Objects of thy Mirth? Are these Divertisements proper for a Creature that holds his very Being of God, and is beholding to him for all the Blessings he enjoys? What wonder if after all this Impiety and Stubborness, God rejoyces too, rejoyces in thy Groans, rejoyces in thy Anguish, rejoyces in thy Agonies, rejoyces in thy Sense of his justice, rejoyces in thy Howlings? This he must do at last to secure his Honour. This he will be obliged to do in the end, to vindicate the Veracity of his Threatnings. This he will be constrained to do after all, that Devils may not Mock his Holiness, or deride his Thunders, nor upbraid him with Partiality. At that time, this will appear very good Divinity, no Fable, no Romance, no Trade of Priests, no Invention of Politicians, no old Wives Tale, no idle Story; and if thou couldst exhaust the Sea in that Day, and weep it out again, to testify thy unfeigned Sorrow, thou wouldst do it.

Happy

Happy the Soul that thinks of this !  
Happy the Man that believes these Ter-  
rors before he feels them. How much  
wiser are those tender Hearts that do little  
else but Weep and Mourn, and make  
their Life a Valley of Tears without a  
Metaphor ! Whose Fear of offending God  
is so great, that every little Defect, and  
every accidental Miscarriage, forces  
Tears from their Eyes : Though there  
may be some Indiscretion in the Manage-  
ment of their Conscientiousness, yet not-  
withstanding all this, their Tears are the  
Wine of Angels ; these are the gaudy  
Dress of a holy Soul. The Almighty that  
sees her adorned with these Pearls and  
glistering in these Pendants, falls on her  
Neck, and kisses her.

Fear not, ye afflicted, and tofs'd with  
Tempests : So the Lord Jesus wept,  
though not for his own Sins, yet for  
the Sins of others, and was receiv'd in-  
to Glory ; so Mary Magdalen Wept, and  
on those Streams a gracious Pardon was  
convey'd into her Soul ; so the great  
St. Paul wept, and found the Consola-  
tions of Christ abounding in him ; so the  
penitent Publican wept, and went justified  
to his House. They that sow in Tears  
shall reap in Joy. *Blessed are ye that weep*  
*now, for ye shall Laugh, Luk. 6. 21.* There  
is



is a place high, wondrous high above, where all Tears shall be wiped away, and no Sorrow, no Grief, no Anguish shall appear; so we have heard, so we shall see e'er long in the City of our God: *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the World shall rejoyce, and ye shall be sorrowful, but your Sorrow shall be turned into Joy. A Woman, when she is in Travel, hath Sorrow, because her Hour is come; but as soon as she is deliver'd of the Child, she remembers no more the Anguish, for Joy that a Man is born into the World. And ye now therefore have Sorrow, but I will see you again, and your Heart shall rejoyce, and your Joy no Man takes from you, John 16. 20, 21, 22.*

2. See here, how differently spiritual things affect Men, as they either attentively, or inattentively think upon them. The process of the Day of Judgment to a Man that retires, and through Desire, separates himself to think of it, as the Covetous doth of his Gold, or as the Timorous doth of his Danger, *i. e.* in good earnest, it will prove an invincible motive to self-denial. Another, that looks upon it, as a thing spoke of in course every Lords Day, thinks of the Word as he hears them, but ruminates not upon the Sense, is no more moved with it, than the Carcasses that sleep in their Graves, forbears not one Sin

Sin for it, but doth still, as he used to do, Mind his Body, gratifie his Flesh, pursue his temporal Interest, comply with sinful Men, please himself, regard Religion on the By, and set his Affections on things below. And as it is in this, so it is in other Truths; for, do but take a view of the Publick Assemblies; here the glad Tidings of God's Mercy to Penitent Sinners shall make an humble Spirit weep, melt his Heart, and force him into humble Thoughts, and lively Admirations of God's Condescension; there sits another, and either sleeps all the while, or continues in as even a Temper as he came: What's the Reason? One weighs the Importance of this Truth, considers the vast distance betwixt God and sinful Man, thinks, if these things be true, how marvellous God's Love must be; and that touches him to the Quick. The other's Thoughts are unstable, as Water, uncertain and inconstant: He satisfies himself with this, that he hath heard a Sermon, performed his Complement to God, and consequently finds no Alteration in his inward Man.

How have I seen sometimes a pious Soul transported with a lively Description of the unseen everlasting Glory, while the greatest part of the Congregation have been no more concerned at it, than if the

*Orator*

*Orator* had spoke of common Trees, and Herbs, and the Hyſop on the Wall? The Reason is plain, the one thinks of it as a Believer, the other as an Infidel. The one reflects, Lord, what am I, and what is my Father's Houſe, that thou intendeſt to advance me to this Dignity, liſt up a poor Worm from a Dunghil to a Throne, and place him with Princes, even with the Princes of thy People, the innumerable Company of Angels! The other pleaſes himſelf only with the Sound, mingles the Thoughts of the World with his Devotion, ſuffers not the glorious Object to lie long in his Mind, and ſo it paſſes, as it came, without any Impreſſion. Here one rejoices at the precious Promiſes of the Goſpel, his very Heart leaps at the joyful News, and they come like Oyl into his Bones, warm his very Soul, and pierce even to the dividing aſunder of Soul and Spirit: There another ſits like a Stock, and wonders what ails his Neighbour to keep ſuch a ſtir about a few empty Words. But why ſhould'ſt thou wonder at the Change thou ſee'ſt in thy Friend? He thinks of the Veracity of God, and how theſe Promiſes will moſt certainly be fulfilled; he thinks, how the Riches God promiſes exceed all the Treasures of this preſent World, and  
what

what Satisfaction they afford to a hungry Soul, how far they do transcend these earthly Glories, and how to have a share in them, is a far greater Priviledge than to be related to the greatest Monarchs; and that raises his Soul into that secret Joy. Thou thinkest no more than a Lyon or Elephant, thinkest more of thy Profit and Gain, than of these intellectual Treasures; thy Thoughts are not busie about these Enjoyments; thou thinkest it time lost to spend any serious Thoughts upon them, and how should thy duller Soul be affected with them?

Here the Example of a Valiant Saint, that fought with his Lusts, overcame his Desires, stood stedfast in the Hour of Temptation, conquer'd the Devil, vanquish'd all Oppositions, kept the Faith, finish'd his Course with joy, draws an attentive Soul into Imitation of his Virtues. There another that hears or reads the same Description, feeds still on his Husks, follows his careless Neighbour, delights in vain Company, continues in his Aversion from the stricter Lives of holy Men. The Reason is evident; for, the one thinks of the noble Attempts such Souls have made, how they are applauded in Heaven, how they have signaliz'd their Valour, what Comforts they have prepared for, and of  
the



the Reward they now enjoy : The other looks upon them as melancholick Men, thinks of his present Pleasure more than of a future Recompence, dives not into the nature of these Conquests, reflects not how agreeable they are to Reason, or how necessary in order to a Crown, but thinks he may have the Diadem spoken of with less Trouble, and therefore he sits still upon his Dunghil. Vain Sons of Men ! How long will ye turn your Glory into Shame ! Hath God bestowed upon you a Faculty which Beasts are strangers to, and for which Devils envy you, even Reason and Understanding, the true Image of your Maker, and will you let it lie dormant in the Ashes and Rubbish of your sensual Inclinations ? When God hath distinguish'd you from the ignobler Brutes, will you be like the Horse and Mule, whose Mouths must be held with Bitt and Bridle ?

Behold, the Almighty hath prepared a Supper for you ; and when the Morning and Noon of your Life is spent, designs a Feast for you at Night, immediately after Death ; a Feast, where the Lamb that was slain sits Master, and intends to bid you welcome ; a Feast, where the Meat will be Angels Food, the Wine Hallelujahs, and the Entertainment, Perfection

fection of Bliss and Glory; the Company, the Apostles of the Lamb, and the Spirits of Men made perfect; a Feast, where no Good will be absent, and no Evil present, where Plenty and Affluence will last for ever, where Joys will abound, and the beatifick Presence of God will charm and ravish Souls to all Eternity. To this Feast he calls you, to this Banquet he invites you, to this Table he sends for you, to these Dainties you are bid, to these Delicates you are entreated to come, of these Varieties you shall be made Partakers; and is it not worth considering, what this mighty Offer means? What if you see it not with mortal Eyes? Your Thoughts may see it, your Understanding may behold it, your Reason may take a view of it. Your Thoughts will tell you, that God, who cannot lye, hath promised it, the Son of God, who is Truth it self, hath revealed it; the Apostles, who came attended with the Power of Miracles, have publish'd it. These will tell you, that there can be no doubt of it, and that it is as certain, as if you were actually Sharers of it. Give but your Understanding leave to search into this Mystery, and you will be charmed with it; give but your Reason leave to ascend and descend

ascend upon the Ladder of the Word of God, and you will feel a Hunger and Thirst after it; your Souls will long for it, your Affections will Breath after it, and your inward and outward Man will labour after it, and strive to enter in at the strait Gate; and shall all these Riches be lost upon you for want of Thinking and Contemplation? Could you by thinking make those Joys visible to you, and will ye refuse it! Could you by meditating make that Glory present to you, and will you neglect the Opportunity? Could you by musing and pondering bring Heaven into your Chambers and Closets, and will ye debarr your selves of that glorious Sight?

See what you lose by your Inconsiderateness! See what Consolations, what Satisfaction, what Cordials, you deprive your immortal Souls of! Can you see other Men run away with all the Comforts of the Gospel, and remain senseless? Can you see others get into the Pool of *Bethesda* before you, and recover, and are you fond of continuing lame, and blind, and poor, and miserable? Can you see others carry away the Crown, and feel no Ambition in you? Can you see others take away the Blessing of your Father from you, and be unmoved at the want of it? Can you see

see how other Men by thinking arrive to Perfection, and will you lye groveling in the Dust? O! think while thinking may do you good. In Hell you'll think, but it will be too late; there you'll think, but your Thoughts will be your Torment? There your Thoughts will be the undoing of you; there you'll think what happy Persons you might have been if you had imitated *Abraham's* Faith, and *Moses's* Resolution, *David's* Candour, and *Josiah's* Piety, *St. Paul's* Courage, and *St. Peter's* Tears, *St. John's* Love, and *Lydia's* Attentiveness, the *Berrhæans* Zeal, and the *Macedonian Churches* Charity, *Zachæus* his Restitution, and the *Publican's* Repentance; but these Thoughts will then be your Vexation, since the working time is past, and the day of Vengeance come. There you'll think that Christ was your Friend, indeed, when he made himself of no Reputation, but took upon him the form of a Servant, became obedient to the Cross, and dyed for you; but to think that he is your Enemy now, because you refused Obedience to him, because you made light of his Offers, and would not accept of him for your Governour, must needs fill you with endless Grief, and bitterness of Spirit. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver, Psal. 50. 22.

3. And



3. And is not the greatest part of the World to be pityed, that can delight in nothing but what they can grasp and feel? The Covetous can delight in nothing but in Gold: If he want Money all his Joy is gone: If his Coffers be full, and his Barns stock'd with Corn, and Plenty doth surround him, his Heart rejoyces, his Soul triumphs, and Cheerfulness plumps his Cheeks; but without this, his Mind is disturbed, his Faculties Languish, his Countenance is dejected, and he looks like a dying Man. Who would imagine, that this Man hath a rational Soul? Who would think, he were created after the Image of God? Who would conclude him to have lived in a Land where the Gospel is preach'd? Who can inferr from his Actions, or Behaviour, that this Man believes a Word of Scripture? Who would take the Wretch for a Disciple of the poor and afflicted Jesus? Who that looks upon him, would not be apt to cry with him, *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis*, Let me die the Death of some brave self-denying Heathen Philosopher? For these certainly are in a likelier way of Salvation, at least of escaping the Wrath to come, than the covetous Christian.

*Diogenes* being desired of *Alexander* the Great to beg either Gold or Silver of him,

him, received this Answer, Do but stand out of the Sun, and do not hinder that glorious Light from shining upon me, and I have enough. The brave *Crates* having sold what he had, and turned it into Money, generously threw it all into the Sea, saying, It is far better, I should drown thee, than that thou should'st drown me in Perdition. *Alexander* having sent to the great *Phocion* two Talents of Gold, the Wise Man ask'd the Messengers, Seeing there were so many good Men at *Athens*, why the King should of all Men make choice of him, to present him? The Ambassadors answer'd, because of all Men he look'd upon him as the honestest. Say you so? Replied the Philosopher, then let *Alexander* give me leave to be still an honest Man, which I can be without all these Presents, and glistering Treasures.

*Cimon* had two large Cups sent him from a *Persian* King, the one full of Gold, the other of Silver. He looks upon them smilingly; and asks the Man who brought them, Whether his Master intended, that *Cimon* should be his Friend or his Servant? The Man replied, It was out of Ambition to have him for his Friend, that he sent it. Oh! then saith he, take them back again, for being his

L

Friend,

Friend, when I have need of them, I can send for them at any time.

*Epaminondas*, when some came to corrupt him with gifts, invites the *Ambassadors* to Dinner, and there entertains them with Roots, and Herbs, and with small four Wine. Dinner being done, Go home, saith he, and tell your Prince, that *Epaminondas* being content with such a Dinner, is not easily to be drawn by Bribes into a base and trayterous Action.

*Fabritius*, the *Roman* General, having concluded a Peace with the *Samnites*, the Magistrates of the *Samnites*, by way of Gratitude send six *Ambassadors* to him with vast Sums of Money, begging of him to accept of it; but he stroaking his Head, and Face, and Breast, and Knees, Gentlemen, saith he, while I can Command these Limbs I have no need of Money; and so dismissed them. *Curius* gave the same Answer to them, adding, that he had rather rule over Persons, that had Money, than be possess'd of Money himself.

These Men were Heathens, whose Delight in Virtue drown'd their Delight in these outward Comforts. They saw, what an Impediment to Goodness, these Heaps of Silver were, and therefore scorn'd to delight in a thing so base and trivial; they

they were sensible, that the Soul had her Riches as well as the Body, and as the former by the Confession of the wiser sort of Mankind, went beyond the other in value, so it was reasonable they should delight in the one more than in the other. These Men were better Christians by the Light of Nature, than Thousands among us are with all the helps that Revelation and Grace affords ; not that the Fault lies in the means, which are larger and richer than *Pagans* and *Infidels* have, but that Men stupifie their Souls more under these Advantages, than Heathens did under the lesser Irradiations of the Divine Light and Splendour.

So then the very Heathens saw, that the more spiritual the Delight was, the nobler it was, and the more it was refin'd, and purified from the Dross of the World, the more rational it was, and therefore more amiable, and fitter to be embraced : And sure, God must have provided but very ill for Mankind, when he embued and impregnated their Souls with a Sense of Religion, if he had not put something into Religion, that's charming and lovely, whereby their Souls might be attracted to delight in it. Religion being derived from him, who is the Fountain of Delight and Satisfaction, must necessarily have



that in it which may make humane Souls rejoyce, and exalt their Delight into a victorious Supremacy above all worldly Pleasures.

What did the Lord Jesus delight in, who lived upon Alms? What did the Apostles delight in, who were in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities and Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in tossings to and fro, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings?

2 Cor. 6.

4. 5.

What did all the Primitive Believers delight in, that were poor,

and naked, driven into Exile, banish'd, forced to Work in Mines, chased away from the Comforts of Wife, Children, and Relations? Something certainly they delighted in; for humane Nature cannot well subsist without delight in something. It could not be the Riches of this World, for they had them not; nor indeed did they care for them, when they were offered them: It was Religion, that engrossed their Delight. This made them joyful in all Conditions; this raised their drooping Spirits under the Rage of their Persecutors; and certainly it would be hard, if a glorious God, with all his Attributes, and the wonderful things he hath revealed to our Comfort, were improper Objects of Delight: And since these

these are the genuine Delights of a Christian, O besotted Soul, why dost thou delight in broken Cisterns, when thou hast the Fountain of living Waters to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in *Apes* and *Peacocks*, when thou hast the Creator of all these to rejoyce in ? Why dost thou delight in a morsel of Meat, when thou hast the Birth-right of eternal Glory to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the shade of the Bramble, when thou hast the shadow of God's Wings to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the nether Springs, when thou hast the upper Springs of Mercy to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in Houses, when thou hast a House made without Hands to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Rivers of *Damascus*, when thou hast the River of God's Pleasure to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in a fading Beauty, when thou hast him that's altogether lovely to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Voice of a deceitful *Siren*, when thou hast him whose Voice comforts the Mourners of *Sion* to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in the Slavery of thy Lusts, when thou hast him, whose Service is perfect Freedom to delight in ? Why dost thou delight in a little Gain, in Drops of Happiness, in Crumbs of Bliss, in shining

Dust, when thou hast a Sea of Glory to delight in?

How deep must thy Soul lie immerst in Body, if such illustrious Objects cannot delight it! How far must thou be yet from the Kingdom of Heaven, if things of this nature cannot content thee! How earthly must thy Heart be, how debauch'd, how perverted from the end of its Creation, if these spiritual Delights are insipid to it!

There are some among us I believe, who have tasted of both Delights, the sinful ones of the Flesh, and those which are proper for holy Souls; tell me, I beseech you, whether you think a Fit of Laughter, or a drunken Bout, or a merry Meeting, you once delighted in, so sweet, so comfortable, so refreshing, as the gentle, and soft, and kinder Influences of God's Spirit, when you have been engaged in Prayer, and Praises, and Contemplations of a future State? When you have been wrestling with God, and after that work of Love have felt a holy assurance of God's Favour upon your Spirits, can any thing be more pleasing, or charming, than those divine Communications? When you have entred into Meditation of God's goodness, and the Love of God hath shined bright upon your Souls, have not you felt

felt that, which hath been as much beyond all sensual Delights as an oriental Pearl is beyond Brass or Copper, or such baser Minerals? Have not you found a Joy stealing upon your Souls after such refreshing Considerations, as hath transported you even into love of Martyrdom? How contented have you been after such Exercises, or after some signal Self-denial? How harmonious have your Spirits and Affections been after such Enjoyments of God's loving Kindness, and how like soft and curious Musick have these Gales of the Divine Goodness composed your troubled Thoughts, and hush'd them into a lasting Peace! And is not this infinitely better, than the Pleasures of *Sardanapalus*, of *Dives*, and other luxurious Men? Will not this turn to better account at last than fleshly Lusts, which War against the Soul? Look upon *Helioabalus*, who tryed how great a Monster a Man could make himself; in his Cloaths you should see nothing but Gold and Purple, his Beds were embroidered, and the Feathers that were in them must be the softer Feathers of Partridges taken from under their Wings, mix'd with the finest Rabbits hair. He would ride in a Chariot shining with Rubies and Diamonds, and not only in the



out-side of his Shooes, but even within, he would have precious Stones : He would not ride abroad under Six Hundred Coaches with him ; his Beds and Rooms were strow'd with all sorts of curious Flowers, and an everlasting Perfume filled his Halls and Parlors : Sometimes in a Frolick he would be drawn in a Chariot by Four Mastiff Dogs, sometimes by Four Tygers as *Bacchus*, sometimes by Four Lions, as *Cybele*, sometimes by Four beautiful Women. Now and then he would cause Ships to be richly laden with all costly Commodities, and then sink them in the Sea. At some of his Meals he would have Six Hundred Estriches Heads at the Table ; and when the Humour took him, all his Courses should be nothing but Pheasants heaped and piled together in Dishes, sometimes they should all be Pullets ; sometimes nothing would serve him, but to have all sorts of deformed Men at his Table, Eight Lane Men, Eight Blind, Eight Blacks, Eight Gouty, Eight Fat, Eight Bald, Eight Deaf. In such Footeries he delighted ; and because the *Syrian* Priests had told him, that he would die an unnatural Death, he would keep Poison in golden Vessels, to kill himself, before any Person should be able

able to lay hold on him : To this purpose, he would have silken Halters about him, and Penknives set with Diamonds to dispatch himself, when he should see occasion. And he built also a Tower, which he over-laid with Gold, that in Case of any sudden Attack, he might throw himself from the top of it. These were the sottish Delights of this Man, and yet after all, he died in a Jakes.

I have mention'd this Brute, and his Actions, because there are in his short Life all the extravagant Actions that a distemper'd Brain can invent, and all the Delights that a mad Man could think of, yet who would not prefer a Delight in a good Conscience, and delight in God's Worship, and delight in Acts of Charity, and delight in Heavenly Thoughts before it ? Sensual Delights must at last expire, but spiritual Delights do not die ; but as you have seen those vast Balls of burnish'd Brass on Church-Steeple cast a glorious lustre as soon as the Sun shines upon them, so at a serious man's Death, his delight in Holiness, upon God's favourable Acceptance of it, instead of expiring and decaying, immediately grows bigger in its Glory, the Rays of it spread, and enlarge their Borders, and stretch themselves into Eternity. And therefore,

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4. *Who can harbour any hard Thoughts of Religion, because it debars us of disorderly sensual Delights?* In doing so, it does us a kindness, is our Friend, prevents our Danger, saves us from the Pit, delivers us from Hell, make us live like Men. It doth not debar us of that which will make us Happy, nor hinder us from solid Joy, nor deprive us of such sensual Delights, as are necessary for our Preservation. The Delights it keeps us from, are fitter for Swine than for rational Creatures: It separates us from delights, which will lead the Soul into the Shadow and Valley of Death, from Delights, which dethrone the ruling part in us, make the Master serve the Man, and from Princes debase us to a state of Thralldom. It denies us such delights as make God our Enemy, move him to depart from us, and provoke him to Indignation. It will not suffer us to meddle with Delights, which destroy the Glory of the Mind, damp our Zeal, alienate the Heart from God, and drive away his holy Spirit from us. It is against all such delights as would make us miserable, and enamoured with Sin, and the World, and in being an Enemy to such Delights it consults our good. It is more favourable to us than we are to  
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our selves, and seeks to make us like God.

God is above all sensual Delights, he is not taken with the Beauty of the Face in Man or Woman; he undervalues a great Table, and hates the Prodigality of the Spend-thrift; he hath no Body to please, no Eyes to satisfy with glittering Objects, no Ears to delight with artificial Sounds, no Blood to cherish with studied Cordials; and though the World be his, and the fullness thereof, yet he solaces not himself in the Pleasures of it; his Delights are great, like himself; spiritual like his Essence, infinite as his Glory, eternal as his Being; he delights in himself, and is to himself the Object of his Pleasure: He Delights in the eternal brightness of his own Glory, and the express Image of his Person: He Delights in his own boundless Understanding, whereby he knows all things, past, present, and to come, and sees all Beings before they are, and what will come to pass, and dives into their nature, ends, designs, and the accidents that befall them: His Delight lies in doing good, and communicating the Rays of his Holiness to his Subjects. He Delights in his own Perfections, and Virtue is the amiable Spectacle of his Eyes: He Delights



lights in a Soul that loves him, and an humble Heart is to him a glorious sight. The Soul that loves her own Lowliness, and is content to be little, and despised in the World, embraces Contempt and Reproaches, and like the mighty *Jesus*, runs with Patience the Race, that's set before her ; this causes Joy in Heaven.

To this likeness, Religion would advance the Soul ; not that it attempts to give it the same Perfection, but that it designs to Work some Resemblance betwixt her, and that Sovereign Being. The Soul being in some measure capable of this Delight, its Endeavour is to bring her to a sense of it. In a word, it seeks to reduce Man to the first state of Innocence, from which by Sin he fell. And though *Adam* had all the Riches and Glories of the World centred in his Paradise, yet his Delights were more spiritual than sensual, since his Joys were not so much from the Flowers, and Trees, and Animals themselves, as from the Excellency Power, Wisdom, Greatness of God, which glistered in their Make, and Use, and the Ends, for which they were created. He saw indeed the *proud Tulip*, the fragrant Rose, the odoriferous Jessamin, and rejoyced ; he beheld the Cherry,  
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the Fig, the Almond, and the Apple, and triumph'd ; he cast his Eyes on the laden Trees, and how they seemed to let down their Arms to put their richer fruits into his Mouth, and was glad ; he took a view of the Fishes, that danced, and leap'd in the Chrystal Rivers, that water'd the glorious place, and his Spirits were enliven'd ; but at the same time, the Bounty, Liberality, and Omnipotence of the great Architect of all, appeared so lively to his Mind, that he made his Garden a true Emblem of Heaven, fell down, and Day and Night sung the Praises of his Creator, as if he vyed with the Angels of the upper World, and were trying, who should hold out longest at melodious Hallelujahs.

This Kindness Religion intends to our Souls, and therefore suggests unto us the Promises and Threatnings of God, to keep our Feet steady in the way they are to walk in : To this purpose it tells us, that he who loves sensual Pleasure shall be a poor Man, poor in Grace, poor in gifts of God's holy Spirit, poor with Respect to God's Favour, poor even to contempt, destitute of those richer incomes, which sanctified Souls receive, deprived of the Juice and Sap, which flows from the flourishing

rishing Vine, the Lord Jesus, in want of a fore-taste of Heaven, and of a sense, *What the hope of God's calling is, and what the Riches of the glory of his Inheritance is in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his Power toward them that believe, according to the working of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the Dead, and set him at his own right Hand in heavenly places, Eph. i. 18, 19, 20.* Who can grumble at Religion after all these advantages? Who can find fault with it after this prospect of its benefits? Who dares asperse that beauteous Virgin after such Fruits it bears? Who would not esteem it? Who would not prize it? Who would not honour it? Who would not speak well of it? Who would not look upon it as a Horn of plenty, and a treasury of the greatest comforts? Who would not maintain the honour of it, against all opponents? Who would not vindicate it, when it is abused? Who would not rise up in defence of it, when blasphemous Tongues would traduce, and revile it? Let no Man say here, I can follow my Carnal pleasures, and yet be religious too; Alas! What Piety can that be, where thy Affections are divided betwixt Religion, and worldly Pleasures,  
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and where these Delights commonly have the greater share? May be thou sayest thy Prayers, so have I seen Parrets, and Magpies repeat a few Sentences, which they have been taught: May be, thou goest to Church; so have I seen a blind Man sit down by a Candle, but to no purpose: Thou mayest attempt to reconcile the Temple of God, and Idols, but these attempts are as vain, as thy pleasures are; while these sensual delights ingross thy Mind, the Word must needs be a Dead Letter to thee: Heaven cannot supple thy Soul, Hell cannot Fright it; the Thunders of God are insignificant to it, and thou art unfit to die, unfit to appear at the great Tribunal.

The Heathens tell this Fable, that *Ceres* coming down from Heaven one Day, gave out, that she was a Nurse; whereupon, King *Eleusius* took her to attend his Son *Triptolemus*, and having him under her Tuition, in the Day time she fed him with celestial Milk, and in the Night she cover'd him with Fire, to give him Immortality. Religion is that Fire, which must make you immortal; this purges away your Dross, and cleanseth your Hearts from the dregs of Sin and Death, makes you bright and shining, and capable of eternal Light. No Nurse is so

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tender of you as Religion is : It feeds you with celestial Milk that you may be strong in the Lord, and able to put on the whole Armour of God, and grow up into a perfect Man in Christ : What ? If it will not suffer you to please your Flesh beyond what is necessary for it's Subsistence, must it therefore be your Enemy ? Will you count it a Foe because it denies you the Sword which would Kill you ? How lovely should this very thing make it in your Eyes ! How dear should this make its holy Precepts to you ! How should you rejoyce, that you have such a Monitor to prevent your Ruine ! What Praises do you owe to God, that withholds you from that which would precipitate your Souls into the gulf of Perdition ! I conclude the Inference with this Story : Two Brethren were travelling, one a very prudent Man, the other rude and silly ; coming to a place where Two Ways met, they dispute, which of the Two they should take ; one look'd as if great Art had been bestow'd upon it, Flowers grew on both sides, and it seemed to be most frequented ; the other look'd rough and uneven, liker a Foot-path than a High-way : the weaker Brother, charmed with the out-side, was clearly for making choice of the former ; but the wiser, though  
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he saw that the pleasant way invited the Eye, yet I fear, saith he, it will not bring us to a commodious Lodging, the rather because I have heard, that the less beaten Path leads to an Inn, where we may have excellent Accommodation. The foolish Fellow was peremptory in it, that the most pleasant way must be the right way; and prevails with the Brother to bear him Company: And being advanced considerably in it, they light upon a Company of Robbers, who immediately clap Shackles on their Hands and Feet, and hale them both to their Captain and Governour. Here one Brother accuses the other; the wiser charges the other with Stubbornness; the weaker blamed the other's Facility, and alledged, that since his Brother pretended to greater Wisdom than he, he should not have been perswaded. In fine, both are found guilty, and both laid up in Prison. These Two Brethren are your Souls and Bodies: Your Soul is the wise, your Body the foolish Brother. Let not your Body by its Importunity prevail with the Soul to consent to its Desires and Fondnesses of the dangerous Delights of the World. O! hearken not to the Perswasions of a sensual Appetite, that chooses a present Satisfaction, but considers not, there are Robbers at the end

end of the way, which will certainly throw both into outward Darkneſs.

5. *The great Day is at Hand, let's prepare for it.* So Chriſt told his Diſciples, and ſo the Apoſtles taught the Chriſtian World; nor muſt we wonder, that the *Bleſſed Jeſus* ſhould Fright his Followers with the Approaches of that Day, when he knew, it would not come in Sixteen hundred Years, and more, which are paſt, ſince his appearing in the World. I omit here the Calculations of curious Men, who have been bold to determine the Year in which the Day of Judgment will happen; ſome that follow the Tradition of *Elias* have allow'd Two Thouſand Years to the Oeconomy before the Law, Two Thouſand to that under the Law, and Two Thouſand to that under the Goſpel, and after this have placed the Succeſſion of that tremendous Day. But I doubt that this is rather a Jewiſh Criticiſm than a real Prophecy: For, God having created the World in ſix Days, and a Thouſand Years being as one Day with the Lord, it's like Men have concluded from this Notion, That as the World was created in Six days, ſo after Six Days, *i. e.* Six Thouſand Years, it would be deſtroyed. Some when they have ſeen any extraordinary Judgments of Hail, or Rain, or Thun-

Thunder, or Locusts, or great Confusions happen in the World, have from thence inferr'd the immediate coming of this Day. Some have placed it in one Year, some in another, but all these are needless Speculations. It's enough that the Decree is sealed in Heaven, that there will be such a prodigious Day; and it was as truly at hand in Christ's time, as it is now, and now, as much as it was then; nay as much now, as it will be but a Year or a Month before it comes in good earnest; for the Day of our Death is at hand, and we know not when, or how soon, whether this Hour or the next, the fatal Messenger will arrest us in our Journey. The Day of our Death is the fore-runner of that greater Day, and according as our Souls are found at the Day of our Death, so they will be judged in that glorious Day: The Judgment, that will be pronounced upon our Souls at our Death, will be proclaimed aloud before the whole World another Day; and if they be so unhappy as to be condemned upon their departure hence, they will all that while, till the great Day comes, Torment themselves with the Thoughts of that Sentence, and the Shame that will ensue upon it, as holy Souls will comfort themselves with the Thoughts of their Absolution.

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Therefore, when our Souls leave this Body, that Day and Hour, is really a Day of Judgment to us: And that this Day is at Hand, none but a Sot can deny; and accordingly all Men of Sense have made, and do make early Preparation for it; and he that doth not imitate them, is so far from giving Proof to the World, that he is wiser than they; that he proclaims his Stupidity, and in a manner, renounces his Portion in the Inheritance of the Saints in light. But then by Preparation I do not mean those little Sprinklings of Devotion, which Hypocrites, and Men who pretend to love God, yet will not part with their Lusts, usually lay upon his Altar, not the *Pharisees* Alms, and Fasts, and Prayer, which were performed with sinister designs, out of Vain-glory and Ostentation; not *Ahab's* Repentance, who put on Sack-cloth, and walk'd softly, but still kept an unmortified Heart; not the *Harlots*

*Pro. 7. 14.* Piety *Solomon* speaks of, who said her Orisons, and paid her Vows, and her Peace-offerings, and thought to make God amends for the Crimes she lived in, by these Services; not *Judas* his Sorrow, who lamented his Sin, because he saw the Hell he was like to drop into; not *Demas* his temporary  
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Severity, which soon chang'd into fondness of the World ; not the *Angel* of *Sardis* his Profession of Religion, who had the Name that he lived, but was Dead ; not the *Jews* Zeal for the Ceremonial Part of God's Worship, while they neglected Justice, Mercy, Chastity, Sobriety and Charity ; not the Zeal of *Ezekiel's* Hearers, who loved to hear, but were loath to do : but, if you would prepare for this Day of Account, so as to be commended by the Judge, the Preparation must have these following ingredients.

1. *Pity those inconsiderate Men that live as if there were no future Judgment.* Say not, where are they to be found ? There is no Country, no City, no Town, no Village, no Street, but the greater part of the Inhabitants live so. All that profess it, all that talk of it, all that live under Sermons which declare it, do not therefore believe it. No Man believes it, that is not thereby restrained from Lusts, which War against the Soul. All that dare be lewd, and repent not, and do not amend their ways and their doings, whatever Opinion they may have of themselves, in despite of their Profession are Infidels, and so much the greater Infidels, because they enjoy means of Grace, and Motives, and Reasons, and Arguments, and helps to believe

believe it ; and yet Act as if there were no such thing.

Express your Compassion to their Souls by your Tears, since they will not weep for themselves. Ah ! miserable Creatures ! E'er long they shall see him whom they have pierced, and Mourn, as one that Mourns for his only Son, and they are not aware of it ! They are hastening to the Shambles, where they will be barbarously butcher'd by hellish Furies, and they are not sensible of it ! Oh, Mourn for them ! They deserve your Pity more than Galley-Slaves, more than Wretches in *Turkish* Captivity : Oh ! call to them, and see whether ye can yet perswade them into a livelier Faith of this terrible Day. O that you could yet save their Souls from Death, and cover a Multitude of Sins ! It's like they'll scorn your Tears, and Laugh at your Admonitions, for the God of this World hath blinded them ; but, Oh ! pray for them, that their Eyes may be open'd, that they may see the Precipice they run upon, and behold the bottomless Gulph, upon the Brink whereof, they stand. They are rolling down the Hill ; Oh ! stop them, if you can, that they fall not into the Lake beneath : Seeing your Zeal for their Souls, your concern for their Welfare, your entreaties

ties to save themselves from this Generation, your sorrow for their undone Estate, your Grief for their hardness of Heart, they may yet relent, and turn before the Lord comes, and smites the Earth with a Curse.

2. *Every day spend some time in reflecting on this Day.* Is half an Hour, or a Quarter of an Hour every Day, such a business, that thou canst find no time for it? How many parts of every Day dost thou spend idly and foolishly? Wouldst not thou find greater Profit in bestowing a few Minutes in Contemplation of that Judgment? Say not, who doth so? What? If none did it, if it be useful, and a Duty, a Wise Man would think himself obliged to practise it, though he had no Company. It's granted the Age is bad, and few there be that will deviate from the Customs of their Neighbours; but without all Peradventure, some there are, that are seriously concerned about their Salvation, who make Conscience of it. Had Men, when Christ conversed on Earth been discouraged, by the small Number that followed him, from embracing his Doctrin and Discipline, how would the World have been Peopled with Christians? Good *Elijah* was not frightened from cleaving to the true God, when he thought all the World



World was become Idolatrous, and why shouldst thou be tempted to forget thy everlasting Interest, because every Body in the Parish thou livest in, is not devout, and wise, and serious? Suppose thou didst live in a Street, where all the Men were Beggars and Vagabonds, would that be a Motive, to follow their unlawful Calling? If a Treasure were to be had in such a place, and all about thee should be regardless of it, wouldst thou be as lazy as they?

The Merchant ventures into that Country, where he thinks none hath been before him, and doth promise himself a richer Return. In Trades, Men commonly chuse that, of which there are but few Masters, in hopes, they shall thrive the better for it. The same may be applied to the Business in Hand, reflecting every day upon that dreadful Account, which few will venture upon; thou wilt be a greater Gainer, and purchase a richer Peace and Satisfaction; thou wilt rest more sweetly at Night, than thy Neighbours, and thy Conscience will be more at ease; thou wilt go about the Works of thy Calling more cheerfully, and thou wilt be able to comfort thy self better, if any Affliction or  
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Lofs do befall thee, than others, who converse little with God and their own Souls.

In the Life of *Pachomius*, we read, that every day he used to bespeak the several Parts and Members of his Body, and talk to them, as if they had been rational Creatures: Behold, saith he, my beloved Parts, I will advise you to nothing but what is wholsom, and useful for you, and therefore shew your selves obedient to my Counsel, and let's serve God cheerfully till we get to a better Place. As to you my beloved Hands, the time will come when you will no more be able to strike your Neighbour, or play at Cards and Dice, and when you will not be able to reach any more after Goods, that do not belong to you. As to you, my beloved Feet, the time will come, when the way you have gone will be stopp'd up, and when ye will be no longer able to run into vain and loose Company. Hearken unto me my Senses, and whatever helps to make up this Mortal Frame, let's strive lustily before Death overtake us, and stand boldly in the evil Day, and Fight bravely, till the great God put an end to our Sweat and Labour, and call us to his

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heavenly Kingdom. What will it profit you to taste of all the Sweets of this World, if any thing can be called sweet in so much Misery? Why should ye be loth to labour, when to labour ye were Born? Why should ye refuse to suffer when shortly you must die, and mingle with Dust? Why should ye seek after a soft and easie Life, when e'er long you'll meet with it in Heaven? This is no Time, no Place for Pleasure; that's only to be found among the Blessed above. This is it, that I would have you comprehend above all things, that through sensual Delights and Satisfactions Men go into unquenchable Fire; but through Bryars and Thorns lies the way to Joys, which shall never have an end. Why do ye Murmur against me when I bid you Fast, and Watch, and Pray? Should I indulge you, it would be your Bane, it would be Cruelty in me to spare you; to give you Ease would be the way to precipitate my self and you into endless Torment. Thus spake that holy Man to the respective Parts and Members of his Body: And thus, *Christian*, do thou preach to thy Soul every Day; ask it, which of those Two Sentences, that shall be pronounced in the last Day, art thou most desi-

desirous of ; of that, *Come ye Blessed*, or of the other, *Depart ye Cursed* ? If (as no Man is fond of Misery) thou dost Hunger and Thirst after the former, come my Soul, let's retire, let's ascend the Hill of God, and from thence take a view of what will be hereafter. The Posture of Affairs thou seest now, will not continue long ; fancy thou sawest a Man whom the Divine Bounty hath crowned with variety of Temporal Blessings. This Person having a Mind to take his Pleasure, retires with his Family to his Country-House, adorned with *Tyrian* Silks, and *Persian* Carpets, and with all the Eastern Riches, and there lives merrily, and at his ease ; one Night being very jovial at Supper, a Servant of his, base and ill-natured, puts some *Le-thargick*, or *Opiate* Potion into his Master's and Fellow-Servants Cup ; and having rocked them all asleep, opens the Doors, lets in Thieves, and Robbers, who having plunder'd the House, at last lay violent Hands on the Master, and to make Sport with him, drag him thus intoxicated into the open Field, and there leave him. In the mean while the Heavens grow black, and a hideous Tempest gathers in the Clouds, and the Sky begins to

*Vid. Drexel. Tribunal. Christi. l. 1. c. 8 ff 5.*



lighten, and the Voice of Thunder to be heard, and a dreadful Rain falls ; and in the midst of all this Noise and Confusion, the besotted Master Wakes, looks about, quakes, trembles, believes himself in another World, is astonish'd to see himself lying on a barren Turf, without Servants, without Attendants, without Friends, without Necessaries, without Conveniences, among Showers, and Storms, and Tempests, stiff with Cold, frozen to Death almost, and beholding nothing but Misery about him.

O my Soul ! thou canst not but look upon such a Person, as the very Emblem of Confusion, and while thou dread'st this fearful State, take heed thou dost not prepare for it, or drop into it ; take heed of carnal Security, for that will expose thee to the Rage and Fury of hellish Thieves, and make God's Indignation strangely surprizing. The Terror that will seize the sleepy Soul, when it is summon'd away to the Bar of a righteous God, will be beyond Storms of Hail, and Tempests of Rain, and Flashes of Lightning, and Claps of Thunder. When Covetousness would entice thee, shew it the miserable *Gebazi* trembling before the Throne of God :

God : When Luxury would tempt thee, bid it look upon the wretched *Belshazzar*, mourning to eternal Ages for his Intemperance : When worldly Mindedness would debauch thee, find out *Nabal* among the damned Spirits, and with that Sight fright the foolish Lust away : When Envy would enter into thy Soul, call out *Cain* from that unhappy Crew, and bid it see its Doom in his Funeral ; when present Satisfaction would make thee slight the after hopes of Glory, bid the profane *Esau* stand forth from his fiery Cell, to which he is condemned, and it will lose its Courage. Thou readest of the *Syrians*, how in a Consternation sent upon them from above, they fled in the Night, leaving all their Provision behind them. But what is this to the Consternation, the Judgment Seat of Christ will strike into that Man, who having slighted his Commands, is on a sudden ordered to come and answer the Reason of his Contempt ; and forced to leave all his vain Excuses, and Apologies behind him. The Name of some Warriors hath frightened Men, Women, and Children ; and then how terrible will the Name of the *Lord of Hosts* be to them, that have Fought against his Holy Spirit by their Stubbornness ! O my Soul, *Blessed is*

be that Watches, and keeps his Garments, lest he Walk naked, and they see his shame, Rev. 16. 15.

3. Walk circumspectly every Day, and use that conscientiousness, you would use, were you sure, you should be summon'd to Judgment at Night. To be sure a dayly Conscientiousness can do no harm. It may possibly deprive thee of the Pleasure of bad Company, but where is the loss, when by that means thou preservest thy better part from being wounded? May be, thou may'st get the ill Will of some Men, that hate any Man, that will not run with them into excess of Riot, but their Hatred is better than their Love; not that a Man is to be fond of the Hatred of others; but since the World does love his own, and is fond only of People, as loose as themselves, it is a Mercy to be hated by such Men, because it is a sign we are not of their Temper. The love of good Men is ever to be valued, but that of Men loose and profane, is but a trouble, except it can be had, without participating of their Sins.

Say not, next Year, or when I have accomplished such a Business, I will trim  
my

my Lamp, and make it ready against the Bridegroom comes. Every Day to live in expectation of the Summons, is the act of a Wife and Blessed Servant : And he that every Day walks with God, walks in a mighty sense of his Omniscience, and Omnipresence, and in his company, business, conversation, dealings, keeps God in his Eye, sets his Laws before him, walks as one resolved to please God in all things, lets not a Day pass over his Head without doing some good, uses the World, as if he used it not, and if through inadvertency he slips, rises again presently, and arms himself with fresh resolutions, is the Person, that lives every Day, as if it were his last Day.

Sinner, wert thou sure, that this Night thou shouldst be summon'd to the Bar of God, wouldst thou swear and lie, and dissemble, and be cholerick, or backward to good Works ? Live, as if thou wert sure of it : For suppose thou continuest in the Land of the Living that Night, thou lovest nothing by this Preparation, nay, thou art a mighty gainer by it, for hereby thy Soul is refresh'd, thy Mind preserved in an excellent Temper, thy Goodness strengthen'd, thy Graces renew'd, thy



Affections enlarg'd, thy Understanding enlightned, thy Will made more tractable, thy Spirits eased, thy Calmness maintain'd, and thy very Body kept in Health. God loves thee, the Promises of the Gospel belong to thee: Devils cannot hurt thee, thou livest like a Christian, actest like a Man of Reason, preparest for thine own quiet, thy Condition is happy, thy Estate safe, thy Life out of danger, thy Conscience clear, thy Confidence in God encreases, thy Satisfaction swells, thy Comforts grow bigger, and thou freest thy self from that Mire and Clay, in which so many Souls do stick, and deliverest thy Soul from that Terrible Pit, which swallows up so many imprudent Travellers.

4. *When ever you see, or hear of the judicial Process of a Malefactor, think and reflect upon this Day.* To take occasion from things we see or hear, to improve our Minds; and to meditate on things useful and great, and beneficial, is the part of a wise Man, and a Christian, who is to remember, that his Reason is not given him, only to Teach him how to live easie, but chiefly to direct him, how to Purifie his outward and inward Man. The great Design of the Gospel, is to refine  
our

our Reason, and to make it subservient to the Purposes of a Spiritual Life; and he that makes External Objects Instruments of spiritual Thoughts, and leads his Consideration from things Visible, to those, which are not seen, imitates the Holy Apostles, and the best Patterns, 2 Cor. 4. 18. The Judicial Process of a Malefactor hath many Circumstances in it, which very much resemble the Proceedings of the last Day. Indeed our Saviour, Mat. 5. 25, 26. describes the last Judgment, by the Processes made for Malefactors in this World. Agree, saith he, with thine Adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the Adversary deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into Prison: Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost Farthing. In which Words, Christ represents to us the Scene of the future Judgment, and consequently intimates, that when we behold the one, we should spend some serious thoughts upon the other.

Think how terrible the sight of the Judge is to the guilty Prisoner, and how much more terrible the sight of a Majestick

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God,

God, will be to the unhappy Sinner that would not be kept in by the Laws, and Sanctions of the great Commander of the World, and stood more in awe of a Child, or Servant, when he was going to commit lewdness, than of him who gave him Life, and being : Think how the Malefactor is frightened and confounded with the vast Company of Men and Women, that crowd in to hear his Tryal, and how much more the impenitent Sinner will be ashamed in the last Day, when all the People that have been since the Creation of the World will look upon him, and hear what his fate will be ; some Orators have been struck Dumb with the greatness of their Auditory, what effect then may we suppose will the Congregation of Mankind have upon a Wretch, that never saw the Hundred Thousandth part of them before ?

Think how it must be with the Malefactor, before the Sentence of Death passes upon him, how heavy his Mind is, how Melancholick his Thoughts, how drooping his Spirits are, and what Palpitations he feels about his Heart, and how far greater the heaviness of the sinful Soul must be before the Sentence of Condemnation proceeds

proceeds against her, from the Mouth of God, how much more sad remembrances, how much more dismal reflections will seize upon her !

And if it be so sad with her, before the Sentence be past, what trembling and horror will invade her after it ? A Malefactor here on Earth may yet entertain hopes of Pardon, his Prince may be merciful, pity the distressed Condition of his Family, remember past Services, and relent, and change the Sentence, but the sinful Soul once condemned to suffer, hath no hopes of forgiveness, no hopes of being Repriv'd, no hopes of being released ; not but that God is infinitely more Merciful, than the meekest Prince on Earth can be, but the time of Mercy is past. Once he was Merciful to her to a Miracle, his Mercy was her Shield, Mercy did encompass her, Mercy lay entreating her, Mercy courted her ; Mercy though abused, came again, and tryed new Arguments ; Mercy followed her, Mercy preserved her from a Thousand Evils, Mercy would not suffer the roaring Lion to Touch her for many Years, Mercy stood by her, even then, when she desperately affronted her Maker, Mercy was Patient towards her, Mercy wept over



over her, Mercy call'd to her, Mercy would have pull'd her away from her Errors, but she thrust this bright Angel away, would have none of it, made light of it, laugh'd at its charms, despis'd its entreaties, scorn'd its carresses, disregarded its smiles, refused its offers, rejected its Embraces, and therefore cannot feed her self with hopes of Pardon now.

Nay, the Malefactor here on Earth, when Men will not Pardon, hath yet hopes, that upon his true Repentance God will Pardon him; but the Soul that departs hence in a sensual, carnal Condition, the same she lived in, hath no higher Court to appeal to, none above God to make her moan to, none beyond the supreme Law-giver to address her self to. The God she hath despis'd, and whose Mercy could make no impression on her, is to be her last Judge; and therefore how much more disconsolate must her state be, than the condemn'd Malefactor's here on Earth!

*5. Whenever you converse with Sick and dying Men, and are present, when their Breath leaves their Bodies, think, and reflect upon this*

this Day. He visits a dying Friend to little purpose, that only comes to condole with him, or to look upon him, or to ask him how he doth, or what Medicines he hath taken, or what Physitian he hath made use of.

The Chamber of a dying Person should make us as serious, as a Church, and compose our Thoughts as much as an Oratory: In such a Room there are various Objects, that invite us to Pious Thoughts, and do naturally suggest to us, very serious Considerations; the sad looks of the Spectators, the Groans of Relations, the Tears of Friends, the Lamentations of Neighbours, and the dying Persons Pain and Misery, and perhaps doubts of his Salvation, which are not to be beheld with a careless Eye. So that when you see the dying Person near Expiring, think with your selves, this Man is going to be judged, his Soul is entring into the Territories of another World, to know what her everlasting state must be: This will shortly be my case. I must e'er long follow her to God's Tribunal; here my stay will be but short; here I have no continuing City; here I am not to tarry long; my Friend, that's gone, shews me the way  
that

that I must go. I saw him expire, I heard his last groans, I was by, when his Eye-strings broke; if the Lord Jesus gave him any assurance of his favour, before he died, with what chearfulness will his Soul meet her Bridegroom in the Air; how welcome will he be in the Court of the great King! What rejoycing will there be, when he, and the other glorified Spirits behold one another, and they see that one more is added to their Number; for there is no envy in Heaven, no grudges, no fretting, because so many are admitted into the Everlasting Mansions, but the more holy Souls do enter there, the more their joy encreases: If this my Friend hath lived above the World, while he lived here, with what gladness will his Soul be brought, and enter into the Kings Palace! How will his Name be remembered there! How kindly will Angels talk of him! How favourable will the Judge be to him! but if his Devotion and Piety hath been but Paint and Shew, what a surprize will it be, immediately upon his coming among the Spirits of another World to be arrested at the suit of the Great God, and to be carried away to his Tryal! He is taken away from his Sick Bed, but should his Soul be sent away with

with a Curse, how much worse will Hell be, than his Sick Bed! In a Sick Bed Physick may yet give some ease, but Hell scorns all Medicines, no Drugs are of any use there, no Cordials, no Cataplasms are to be found there, no vulnerary Herbs grow in that Wilderness: On a Sick Bed, Friends may yet Comfort us; but in Hell, there is no Friend, all are Enemies, all hate one another, because none can deliver the other from his Torments: In a Sick Bed Neighbours may give their advice, but in hell no advice can be given; for the Inhabitants are not capable of taking it: The Devils indeed may advise them to speak evil of God, because of the irreversibile doom they lye under, but that's a Remedy infinitely worse than the Disease, and they that follow this Counsel increase God's Anger, and their own Plagues, and as they venture upon new Sins, so God must inflict new Curses, and try new Rods and new Scourges, which makes the Misery truly infinite.

Such Reflections the sight of a Sick and dying Man will cause; nor is this judging of his everlasting and final State but a mere occasional Meditation, undertaken for no other end, but to affect our  
own



own Souls with the Day of God's righteous Judgment, to improve our own Thoughts, and to make a holy use of such Occasions, as God's Providence thinks fit to present to us.

6. *Whenever you go to a Funérál, think of this Day of Judgment.* It's a marvellous thing to see, how Men spend their time at Funerals. Though they are in the Room where the Dead Body lies, yet they Drink, and Laugh, and are merry, and talk of any thing, that their Fancy, or their Business, or the Reports of People abroad do suggest. Though Death stands before them, and the Corps seems to exhort them to Contemplations of their Mortality, and the Consequences of Death, yet how carefully do they shun all Discourses and Thoughts of that Nature? The Life, the Actions, the Vertues, and the good Qualities of the Dead Persons, might deserve some Pious Conferences; or his Change, and passing from this Life into auother, and being freed from the Burden of the Flesh, and from innumerable Troubles and Vexations, which this Life is Subject to, would be no unseasonable Subject of Discourse upon such Occasions. But so great is the Aversion of  
most

most Men from such kind of Entertainments, that any thing rather than this, though never so frivolous, shall be hearken'd to, and either the News of the Town, or their Trade, or their Merchandise, or their Sports, or some thing of this Nature, is preferr'd before the melancholy Prospect of Eternity: Or if some Pious Person, begins a Spiritual Discourse, or to talk of something suitable to that Occasion, the Company is struck Dumb on a sudden, and glad when the Stream turns, and some other impertinent Subject is pitch'd upon. In a Word, Men go to a Funeral, as to a Play, or Shew; and as they bring no serious Thoughts with them, so they carry none away. But thus it must not be with you, who are sensible that such Opportunities are presented to you by Providence, to strengthen your inward Man. And therefore, when you see the Mourners go about the Streets, when you your selves accompany the Corps to the Grave, think of the great Sentence the Soul will receive upon her Approaches to the Throne of the Heavenly Majesty. St. Hierom describing the Funeral of the happy Paula, that famous Saint, who while she lived here, was Eyes

*In Epitaph  
Paula Rom.*

to

to the Blind, a Nurse of the Poor, a Staff to the Lame, and an Example to all religious Persons, tell us, that when she was Dead, there were heard no Shrieks, no Howlings, no Weeping, no despairing Lamentations, but Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs: Her Corps was carried to the Grave upon Bishops Shoulders, Prelates carried Lamps and Wax-Candles before her, and a Quire of Singing-Men accompanied her to her Tomb, and most of the People of *Palestina* came together to attend the Funeral. The Monks crept out of their Cells, the Virgins from their Retirement, and good Men, in all Places thereabout, thought it Sacriledge not to pay the last Office to her. The Widows and Orphans, as in the case of *Dorcas*, came, and shew'd the Garments she had made for them; and all the indigent and needy cryed, they had lost a Mother: And for Three Days, Psalms were sung in *Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Syriack*; and every Body celebrated her Funeral as if it had been their own.

When you behold the Funeral of such a holy Person, think, how with far greater Pomp the Angels meet the Soul of the deceased at the Gates of Heaven, and on  
their

their Shoulders, carry it to the Throne of everlasting Mercy. Think how joyfully those blessed Ministers conduct such a Soul to her eternal Rest, and how they Triumph that she is deliver'd from the Burden of the Flesh, and advanced from a Valley of Tears, to a place of endless Glory. When the great *Constantius* died in *Britain*, his Ashes were put in a golden Chest, and with great Pomp carried thro' *France*, and *Italy*, to *Rome*; but, think how far greater Honour it is, for such a holy Soul to be convey'd by the Spirits of Light into the City coming down from Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, the Twelve Gates whereof are Twelve Rev. 21.  
 Pearls, and the Streets pure 20, 21.  
 Gold, as it were transparent Glass.

On the other side; when you see the stately Funeral of a voluptuous and sensual Man, such as *Attila* was, the Soldiers tearing their Hair, the Courtiers weeping, the Body wrap'd up in Silk, the Guard proclaiming his valiant Actions, and Monuments erected upon the Grave, of Gold, of Silver, and of Iron; think on the more dismal Funeral of his Soul, in case it was not wash'd here with the Waters of Repen-  
 tance,



tance, and which is the greatest Purification, with the Blood of Jesus: Think, if the Soul be for ever separated from the glorious Presence of God, and commanded away into everlasting Darkness, not all the stately Monuments raised for the honour of her Body will qualifie her Misery in the other World; not all the Acclamations or Applauses of Flatterers will give her any Comfort, not all the Riches she enjoy'd on Earth, nor all her Wealth and Greatness, and Dominion, will there extinguish the least Spark of Fire her Conscience will feel. This dreadful Funeral will be attended with Crouds of unhappy Spirits,\* who, instead of mourning, will rejoyce at the Guest that's come into their Tents, and *Lycaon* like, cover her with eternal Darkness. Such a Soul is laid in a worse Grave than her Body, even in the burning Lake, where the Misery is proportion'd to her former Sins, and her Conscience frighted with Scenes of Horror; and the Remembrance of her *Quondam* Pomp encreases her Discontent and Anguish: Think of this, and learn to be sober, think of this, and learn self-denyal; think of this, and learn not to love the World: Think of this, and learn to secure the Light of God's Countenance: Think of this, and learn to honour them  
that

that fear the Lord: Think of this, and learn to do good in your Generation.

7. *To avoid the Terror of this future Judgment, judge your selves here on Earth; for if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. II. 31. Then we judge our selves, when we confess our particular Errors; and Condemn our selves for the Commission, when with Grief, and sorrow of Heart, and Indignation against our selves, we do acknowledge, that we have abused the Divine Mercy, and by so doing, deserved his taking his holy Spirit from us; when we lay his Threatnings before us, and confess that these Plagues are due to us, and that we have deserved them, and wonder at the patience of God that hitherto hath been loath to give order to the destroying Angel to seize on us; when, from a sense of our Neglects and Sins, we cry, It is a bitter thing and evil, that we have forsaken the Lord, and that his Fear hath not been in us, and are so convinced of our Demerits, that we can give no other Reason for our Escape and Preservation so long, but God's infinite Goodness.*

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This is to accuse our selves ; a necessary Part or Action in this Judgment ; so far from being unnatural, that it is a very Ordinary, nay, necessary Effect of true Repentance. In humane Courts of Judicature, the Malefactor is not bound to accuse himself ; but in the Court of Conscience, when we stand before God, and remember we have to deal with the Searcher of Hearts ; to accuse our selves before him, is not only our Duty, but our Interest ; we are gainers, and advantage our Cause by it, and render God propitious and kind, not that we make any alteration in God's Nature, but we rely upon his Promise, which is, that he will spare us upon this Self-accusation : Nor is this all, but we prosecute the task of judging our selves, when we are angry with our selves for imprudence in neglecting so great Salvation, and study, how to be revenged upon our Corruptions ; when we decry our inward, and outward failings, and are resolved to mortifie them, were they as dear to us, as our right Hand and Foot, and the Apple of our Eye ; when we erect a Tribunal in our Souls, and bid our disorderly Thoughts, and Words, and Actions appear before us, and give an account of their behaviour, and finding they

they have been exorbitant, lash them into better manners ; when we lay mulcts on our inordinate desires, in case they will not yield, and put our Flesh to some more than ordinary Trouble, in case it will not be kept within its due Bounds and Limits; when we punish our Eyes, by fixing them so many Minutes on Heaven, or on the Word of God, because they gazed on things, which God hath forbid ; when we chastise our Ears with hearing so many Sermons, because such a Day, they listned with pleasure to an offensive Story ; when we inflict silence upon our Tongues for some Days, because such a time they spake things either undecent, or injurious to our Neighbours ; when we bid our Feet keep at home for a considerable time, because they ran into Evil Company, when they should not ; when we deny our Body its necessary Food and Refreshment for some time, because it pamper'd it self such a Day, and play'd the wanton ; when we will not let our sensual Appetite enjoy its harmless, and innocent delights for a certain time, because the other Day it was greedy after outward and carnal Satisfactions ; when we suffer our selves to be reproached without answering, because such a Day we flew out into an unruly passion.

This



This is to judge our selves, and they that do so, may be Confident, they shall not be condemn'd with the World ; in doing so, we do that to our selves, which God would have done to us, if we had continued Impenitent, and insensible, and take that Vengeance of our selves, which God would have taken of us in a severer manner, in case we had not bethought our selves ; and thus we prevent his Anger, and shew, that we dread his Wrath, and seek his Love, that his Threatnings fright us, and that we have just apprehensions of his Indignation ; and such Men the Holy Ghost counts happy, for, *blessed is he, that feareth always,* saith the wise Man, *Prov. 28. 14.*

8. *In your Actions, regard not so much how they are relish'd with Men, as whether they will hold Water, and endure the Test, before the Judge, when your naked Souls must appear before him.* It is a very great fault, to Govern our selves by the Opinion of Men : Even Heathen Philosophers saw, that the way to Virtue, was to despise the Opinions of Men. And indeed, where we make meer Opinions the measure of our Goodness, we cannot but

but run into very great Errors. It's true, we are to provide things honest in the sight of Men, and we are not to give Offence to others in any thing, especially in matters where Duty is not concerned, and we are concerned to let our light shine before Men, that others may see our good Works, and may praise our Father which is in Heaven ; but this differs very much from governing our selves in matters of good and evil, by the Opinions of Men. We are not therefore to think, our Actions are truly good, because Men have a high Opinion of them, nor to believe there is no hurt in many things we do, because Men see none, or because they are charitable, and will not put an ill Construction upon them.

Abundance of our Actions appear plausible to Men, who see no further than the outside ; but let's consider, whether they will bear the piercing Eye of this All-seeing Judge ; it's true, should God lay our Righteousness to the Line, and measure our Religious actions by the exact Rule of his Wisdom, Justice and Holiness, he would spy innumerable flaws even in the Services of the devoutest Person living, but he proceeds not according to that rigour, for the great Mediators sake he

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makes

makes large allowances for accidental infirmities, and incogitances, and unforeseen, and involuntary slips, and the sincerity of a good work is that he chiefly takes notice of, whether the intention was good, whether the design was holy, whether Love was the Principle of it, whether it was without reserves of some secret Sin, whether there was candour, and ingenuity in it, and whether the offering was free, unforced, unconstrain'd by any outward Motive, and whether Charity lay at the bottom.

Many of our Actions may want these qualifications of Sincerity, and yet appear specious, and gay, and glorious in the Eyes of Spectators, and those we converse withal: Look not *Christians* on the commendations of your Neighbours in your acts of Piety, but on the commendations of that Judge, to whom ye must give an account; for *not he that commends himself, or whom Men commend, is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*, 2 Cor. 10. 18. If he do not commend our Works, all the approbations of Mortal Men, will do us but little good another Day; and serve only to tell us, that we were cheated by those *Encomiums*. Alas! How many Men are counted Just and Righteous, Honest  
and

and good, here on Earth, whom the great Judge will not find so, when he comes to examine their deeds by the Rule of Sincerity ! Sirs ! matter not, whether Men do look upon you as devout, but pray that God may esteem you so ; Alas, what doth it signifie, that Men call me Religious, when God knows, I am an Hypocrite ? What comfort can it be to me, that Men think me charitable, when God sees, I give Alms to be seen of Men ? What will it profit me, that Men call me Zealous and Fervent, when God sees, that gain, and profit is the cause of it ? What doth it avail me, that Men say, I pray well, when God sees, I study to please the Company ? What great advantage can it be to me, that Men say I am humble, when God sees pride in that very humility ? The Apostle therefore bids us look to the manner of our performances ; *He that gives, let him do it with simplicity ; He that rules, with Diligence ; He that shews Mercy, with cheerfulness ; let Love be without dissimulation, be kindly affectioned one to another with Brotherly Love, &c. Rom. 12. 8, 9, 10.*

So, when you pray, let your Hearts breath out holy Desires ; when you sing, let your Minds bear a principal Part in



the Hymn ; when you come to the Table of the Lord, let your Souls be touch'd with the Love of *Jesus* ; when you are kind to your Neighbours, banish all sinister Designs ; when you express any holy Fervours, let God's Glory be in your Eye ; when you discharge any part of your Duty to God and Man, let a cheerful Obedience to the Gospel be the Motive : Do all this as unto God, not as unto Men ; do it, as if no Creature saw you ; do it, as if none but God were before you ; do it, as if you were to be summoned this Moment to Judgment : Such Services will endure the *Probe*, such Devotions will stand good, such Acts of Piety will bear searching, such Works God himself will bear witness of, that they were wrought according to his Will, and by the Power of his holy Spirit.

9. *What Injuries you receive in this World from Men, bear them patiently, out of regard to this great Day of Judgment, when God will set all things to rights, and take care that you lose nothing by your Sufferings. Rejoyce Christian in thine Innocence, which God intends to proclaim in this Day before all Men and Angels. He'll wipe off all the Dirt and Aspersions that are thrown upon thee,*

thee, in that day : He will bring forth thy  
Righteousness as the Light, and  
thy Judgment as the Noonday. Psal. 37. 6.

What need'st thou take notice of an Affront offer'd to thee, when thy God stands engaged to take notice of it with a Witness in that Day ? What need'st thou seek Revenge, when thy Master whom thou servest, is resolved to judge thy Cause in that Day ? What need'st thou fret and rage at the Contempt, Men put upon thee here, when thy great Lord will be sufficiently angry with the Offender in that Day ? What need'st thou Grieve that Men abuse thee here, when thy Sovereign Master will grieve every Vein of the Reviler's Heart in that Day ? What need'st thou be concerned for the Reproaches Men cast upon thee for thy Righteousness sake, when he, for whose Name thou sufferest, will vindicate thy Wrongs, and call the Persecuter Fool for his Pains in that Day ?

Say not, at this rate there will be no living for me in the World ; but trust that God, who hath promised to clear thy Innocence in that Day, and he will hide thee under the shadow of his Wings, while thou art in this troublesome World : He

that preserved *Elijah* when *Ahab*, and *Jezabel*, and all the Prophets of *Baal* were enraged against him, knows how to keep thee in the Hour of Temptation. Ay, but Revenge is sweet! What if it be so to Flesh and Blood? It will prove bitter to thy Spirit: And if ever thou art saved, a bitter Repentance must come in, and salve the Wound; and wilt thou prepare for a needless and uncertain Repentance? How knowest thou, whether God will after the Fact, give thee his holy Spirit to come to this Repentance? And what Cruelty is it, when God is Resolved to revenge thy Quarrel, that thou wilt needs revenge it too? If thou revengest it, God will take no care to plead for thee; but if thou leave thy Cause entirely to him, thy patience will be infinitely recompens'd in that Day. Thus did thy blessed Master,

*who when he suffer'd, threat-*

*1 Pet. 2. 23. ned not, but committed him-*  
*self to him that judges righte-*

*ously.* Wilt thou boast of being his Disciple, and art thou loath to follow his Example? Fear not, those Men who wrong thee now, will be sufficiently sorry for the Injury, either here, if ever they be truly converted; or hereafter, when the  
Al-

Almighty will convince them to their everlasting Grief, how much they were mistaken in their Verdicts, and what sinister Constructions they put upon thy Actions, how barbarous their Rage was against thee, how inhumane the ill Language they gave thee, and how unjust all their Reproaches were. Do but stay a little while, and thou shalt see it with thine Eyes: Have but Patience until that appointed Day, and thou wilt find, the Prophet was in the right, when he said, *The Righteous shall rejoyce when he sees the Vengeance, so that a Man shall say, Verily, there is a reward for the Righteous; Verily, he is a God that judges in the Earth, Psal. 58. 9, 10.*

10. Consider particularly, *That it will be more tolerable for Heathens, and professed Infidels at this Day, than for Christians;* Matt. 11. 22. and not without reason. Treason is more excusable in a Stranger than in a Citizen or Domestick, and more may be pleaded for a sinful Life in a Pagan, than in one of Christ's own Household. A Heathen is obliged to God by the Right of Creation and Preservation; but a Christian hath, besides these, Baptism, and his Vows, to



tye him: His Motives to the Fear of God are stronger than they can be in other Religions. Where the greatest Rewards are, there we may justly believe People will be most industrious, most laborious, and most sedulous. No Religion proposes those rewards, that Christianity doth. The Heathens either had doubtful Apprehensions of an everlasting Happiness, or were Strangers to the nature of it. Among us this endless Glory is not only professed, but most clearly revealed; we are sure of it, confident of it, have no reason to dispute the certainty of it, and the nature of it is discovered to us by him who came out of his Fathers Bosom; therefore he that under these Manifestations proves careless and negligent of God's Love, can have no Excuse.

And as Heaven is or may be seen in all its Glories among us, so we are assured of a burning Lake, of an endless Misery, which attends the unconscionable and disobedient; whereof the Notions of Pagans, and Idolaters, were but dark, and consequently we have a stronger Bridle to curb the Violence of our sinful Desires than they; and therefore this must make our Doom more Terrible.

The

The helps we have to arrive to Vertue are not only more in Number, but more powerful, our Knowledge is greater, our Instructions greater, our Illumination greater, our means of Grace richer; and we have greater Examples of Holiness than ever the Heathen had; we have besides Philosophy, and the Law of Nature, the Sacred Scriptures, and besides Conscience, the Spirit of God to exhort us, to reprove us, to admonish us, to assist us, and to help our Infirmities. If a Heathen Sin, he doth but stumble in the Dark; if a Christian Sin, he falls at Noon-day. We have Sacraments to bind us to a perfect hatred of Sin; and *Semiramis* took no more pains to fence her City with Brick Walls, than the Almighty doth our Souls from falling a Prey to the Prince of Darkness; nay, our Impediments in our way to Bliss are less than the Pagans had: By Baptism, and the Power of Christs Death, the Powers of Darkness are broken, the Devils Strength is much abated, his Arrows are not half so fiery as once they were. The Heathens have far greater Obstacles. The Devils Power among them seems unlimited, and therefore for us to fall a Prey to this Enemy, for us to yield to his Suggestions, for us to be

drawn into his Net, will scarce admit of a charitable Apology.

These things are now made light of; but nothing is more reasonable, than that they who have abused the greatest Mercy, should feel the severest Lashes: *Christian*, why should God give thee greater Light, and greater advantages, than to other Men? They are Men of the same passions thou art of, and they are Flesh, and have Reason, and are God's Creatures; and depend upon his Providence, as well as thou; and why should God make a difference betwixt thee and them? No other Reason can be assigned, but his undeserved Compassion. Thou wicked Servant, had thy Master a greater kindness for thee, than for thy fellow-Servants, and could not this distinguishing kindness prevail with thee to be faithful, and loyal to him? Thy ingratitude is abominable, and thy Torment shall be proportionable: Thy impiety was intolerable, and thy Flames shall be so too: Thy baseness is inexpressible, and thy plagues shall be so too: Thy unworthiness is uncommon, and thy agonies shall be so too: Thou deservest a bitterer Cup, and thou shalt Drink it too. If God should not punish thee more than Heathens, he would be partial, his Honour

nour would suffer in the indulgence, and he hath but little Encouragement from thy good nature to lessen his Wrath and Fury.

*Dionysius* talked Atheistically, as well as thou, but he had no Scripture to direct him. The *Sybarites* were luxurious as thou art, but they knew not what the Gospel meant. *Novellius Torquatus* was given to drunkenness, as thou art, but he never made Vows against it in a Sacrament of Baptism. *Tarquinius* was Proud, as thou art, but he never heard of the humble *Jesus*. *Julia* was vain in her dress and habit, as thou art, but she understood not, what the stupendious Work of Redemption meant. *Decius Mundus* was lecherous as thou art, but he was not acquainted with a Holy, Sanctifying Spirit. *Themistocles* was envious, as thou art, but he never heard God speaking to him by his Son. *Epicurus* was careless of a future Immortality, but he had not Ministers to Preach to him. *Simonides* was covetous, as thou art, but he knew of no Articles of belief. *Philagrius* was cholerick as thou art, but he made no profession of Goodness and Religion. *Sisamenes* was unjust as thou art, but he never heard, that the Unrighteous are not to inherit the Kingdom.



dom of God. *Unidius* was uncharitable as thou art, but he had not that Cloud of Witnesses, those holy Examples that thou hast. *Sardanapalus* minded nothing but his Lusts, and Belly, as thou dost, but he never heard of a Crucified Saviour. *Democles* was a flatterer and dissembler, as thou art, but the Terrors of the Lord were never manifested to him. All which advantages thou possessest above these *Pagans*, therefore it must needs be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* at the Day of Judgment, than for thee.

II. *Let the process of this Day among other Vertues, engage you particularly to a practical Charity, and readiness to do good to others, who are under Affliction, especially where God hath blessed you with conveniences, and superfluities; for the Judge is resolved to insist upon this Vertue more than others: This he has not only assured us of, Matth. 25. 34, 35, &c. but it is also the most reasonable thing in the World, that we who hope to find Mercy in that Day, should be acquainted with shewing Mercy to Christ's distressed members here; for it is Christ's Rule, that Luke 6. 38. with what Measure we mete here, with the same Measure it shall be meted to us again; and to this purpose*

pose the Apostle, *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; but he that sows bountifully, shall reap also bountifully*, 2 Cor. 9. 6.---The Virgins that wanted Oyl, were excluded from the Wedding-feast, when the Bridegroom came; that Oyl was Charity, which therefore the good *Samaritan* poured into the Wounds of the distressed Man; and as Oyl supples the Joints, gives ease to the part, which is in pain, and is an ingredient of most Chyrurgical Operations, so Charity relieves the Miserable, and refreshes the Calamitous, and hath an influence upon all other Vertues. It was therefore wisely said by that pious Duke of *Savoy*, when one ask'd him, where his hunting Dogs were; he led them into his Hall, were abundance of *Lame*, and *Blind*, and *Poor People* fed at his Cost and Charges; these, saith he, are my Dogs that serve me in my hunting after Heaven and Happiness: All other Vertues lose their glory, where Charity doth not bear them Company. To this Vertue we are Born, and it is the most easie of all the rest, and therefore to want it when we come before the Judge, must needs turn his Face and Favour from us.

And

And it is remarkable, that the Judge represents all the acts of Charity, he reckons up in this Day, as done to himself, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, &c.* whereby he doth not only intimate the close union, and communion, the poor Man hath with him, insomuch that he is one with him, but shews, that in our Alms, and doing good we must have respect chiefly to *Christ Jesus*. Let the Man, that begs thy Charity or wants thy Relief, be brought to Poverty by his own folly, let him be wicked, let him be ungrateful; give him with respect to thy Saviour; look upon *Christ* when thou dost supply his wants; have the Lord *Jesus* in thine Eyes, regard not so much the poor Man's Nature, because he is of the same Flesh with thee, nor so much his Relation, because he is of Kin to thee, nor so much his Country, because he is of the same Town, that thou art of, nor so much his Religion, because he professes the same Faith with thee, nor so much his Person, because he is a Gentleman, nor so much his readiness to extol thy bounty, as the Love and Charity of the Holy *Jesus* to thy Soul and Body. Have that in thine Eye chiefly, when thou openest thy Hand,  
let

let him be in thy Mind, when thou distribute thy bounty; this makes thy Charity amiable, and acceptable, and fit to be proclaimed, and commended in this Day.

And indeed, how dost thou know Christian, but that thy Saviour may sometimes disguise himself, and appear to thee in the shape of a poor Man, and wilt not thou give freely, wilt not thou give cheerfully, wilt not thou give readily, since thou knowest not, but thou may'st give it to thy Saviour himself? And how glorious an *Encomium* will it be in the last Day, to hear him say before the World, *I was naked, and this good Man cloathed me, I was in Prison, and he visited me!* The Three Angels of Old disguised themselves in the shape of Travellers, to try *Abraham's* hospitality, and from hence possibly came the Heathenish Fables, that their *Jupiter* came in the Habit of a Poor Man to *Philemon*, who entertaining him, *Jupiter* made his House a Temple, and the Owner, the Priest of it; and that *Apello* coming as a Traveller to *Mydas*, and being kindly entertain'd by him, rewarded his Bounty with vast Wealth and Riches; though we have no warrant from Scripture to believe that Christ doth actually disguise himself  
to



to us in such shapes, and appears to us to try our Charity, yet it is no impossible thing, and we may piously believe it, thereby to encourage our selves to cheerful Contributions, lest finding us hard-hearted, and ill-natured, covetous, and incompassionate, he deal with us, as *Jupiter* among the Heathens, is said to have dealt with *Lycaon*, whom when he came to visit as a guest, and found cruel instead of being hospitable, he turned him into a Wolf. *Christ* hath threatned the hard-hearted a worse, and stranger *Metamorphosis*, for they that will not be like him in doing good, shall be doomed to be like Devils, to Mourn and Lament as they, and to Eternal Ages too, for this is the Sentence, *Go into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat, &c. Mat. 25. 41, 42.*

12. *Let nothing discourage you from admiring those Men who live in the Thoughts, and Contemplation of this future Judgment; We admire Men for their Parts, Abilities and Accomplishments; we admire Aristotle for his Learning, Archimedes for his Mathematicks, Socrates for his Gravity, Absalom for his Beauty, Achitophel for his Policy, Saul for his Tallness, Arion for his*

his Musick, *Asabel* for his Nimbleness, the Men of *Benjamin* for their Skill in Slinging, *Darius* for his Gratitude, *Cicero* for speaking, *Virgil* for Poetry, *Urbino* for Painting, &c. but these are poor things for our Reason to admire ; Men that live Day and Night in a sense of this future Judgment, live continually in expectation of the Arch-angel's Trumpet, or the Summons of Almighty God, these are the Men, whose Praise we ought to shew forth in the Gates. Let others admire *Demosthenes* for his *Rhetorick*, I will admire *St. Paul*, who so look'd at the things not seen, even at this Judgment, as to rejoyce in Tribulation, and though troubled on every side, yet was not distressed ; though perplex'd, yet was not in despair ; though persecuted, yet was not forsaken ; though cast down, yet was not destroyed ; appeared to the World, as sorrowful, yet was always rejoycing ; as poor, yet made many Rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessed all things, 2 Cor. 4. 7, 8, 18. 2 Cor. 6. 10.

Let others admire *Arcefilaus* for his Prudence, *Scipio* for his Fortitude, *Aristoclides* for his humanity, *Pythagoras* for his Philosophy, I will admire the Primitive Believers, who stood in such awe of this Great Day,

Day, that their constant Thoughts and Contrivances were, how to resist their Adversary the Devil, and upon this account stood fast in the Faith, quitted themselves like Men, were strong, and always abounding in the Work of the Lord. The thoughts of that Day made them vigilant, sober, heavenly-minded, despisers of the World; charitable, kind, tender-hearted, fruitful in all good Works, and why should we delude our selves, or fancy we need not do so, or that they did more than they ought to have done? The Best of Men, the Wisest Men, the Holiest Men that ever lived, have been frightened, over-awed, supported, preserved in goodness by the contemplations of that Day, and therefore, if we are not, it's no sign, that we are wiser than they, but that we are more stupid; we are all ambitious of participating of their glory, and why should we be afraid of taking the way, that led them to it? These are the Men, who choose the better part. These are the Men, who though laugh'd at by the World, are a Crown of Glory, and a Royal Diadem in the Hand of their God; and for their Shame they shall have Double, and for their Confusion, they shall rejoice in their portion. Their light shall come, the  
Glory

Glory of the Lord shall rise upon them: They shall break forth on the right Hand, and on the left, and in Righteousness shall they be established: They shall dwell on high, their place of defence shall be the Munition of Rocks; Bread shall be given them, their Water shall be sure: Their Eyes shall see the King of Glory in his Beauty, they shall behold the Land, that is very far off; even the Land, where Rivers of Pleasures flow, where no Tears are to be seen, no Sorrow to be found, no Anguish to be heard of. These are the Men which at last shall sit down in the Throne of God, and having suffered Hunger and Thirst with the holy Jesus here, shall Eat, and Drink at his Table in his Kingdom. These Men will at last be look'd upon with greater fear and reverence, than now they are, and when the brutish World shall see them advanced to the highest Seats of Bliss, and behold that these which once were the most contemptible Creatures, shall judge the World with the Son of God, they will change their Voices, and with the *Maltbesses* be ready to call them Gods, whom but a little before they condemned, as Varlets and Villains.



I conclude this discourse, with St. Peter's exhortation, 2 Pet. 3. 9. 15. The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise, as some Men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should Perish, but that all should come to Repentance. But the Day of the Lord will come, as a Thief in the Night ; in the which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat ; the Earth also, and the Works that are therein shall be Burnt up ; seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be in all Holy Conversation, and Godliness, looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens being on Fire shall be dissolved, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat ; Nevertheless we according to his Promise look for New Heavens, and a New Earth, wherein dwells Righteousness ; wherefore Beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that you may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and Blameless.

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